

A film and video exhibition features works by 60 artists from 16 countries.
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The theme of Lotus Blue is "fusion Thai," meaning its hot, but not too hot.
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This man traveled through 28 countries in 77 days, spending just \$3,305, and his secret is ...
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Snowstorm Doesn't Bring Standstill

By Chen Ying

The unseasonably early snowfall last Thursday night caused only minor traffic disruptions, unlike the first snowfall in 2001, which brought the city to a virtual standstill for a day.

According to Xinhua, the meteorological department provided a 24-hour service to the emergency communication direction department. More than 2,300 patrolling traffic police and an additional 197 patrol vehicles were dispatched around the city that night.

Relevant departments were urged to ensure the snow was removed from the roads within six hours. Meanwhile bus services were extended for an extra hour on over 700 city routes on Thursday night.

The snowfall was the heaviest on record for November, while the accompanying thunder storm was the latest ever recorded. Liu Sheng, an

engineer from Beijing Municipal Meteorological Station, told Xinhua it was uncommon to hear thunder as late as November, and rare for snow to be accompanied by thunder. Before last Thursday, the latest thunder storm to hit Beijing was on November 3, 1979, he said.

Meanwhile, the early arrival of snow caused extensive damage to the city's trees. With the majority of trees yet to shed their leaves, the burden of the snow proved too heavy for many, and by Friday morning, the streets were littered with broken branches.

According to a report of *Beijing Youth Daily* Wednesday, over 13,000,000 trees in the city area were damaged, causing an economic loss of around 110 million yuan.

Yang Zhihua, of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Parks, said the bureau would start pruning trees before winter in future, and would also adjust the planting ratio of evergreen and deciduous trees.



One of the 13,000,000 trees damaged by last week's snowstorm

Photo by Photocom

Beijing Strengthens Protection of Imperial City

By Hou Mingxin

Beijing Municipal Government last week ordered a halt to all real estate development within the area of the former Ming and Qing imperial city.

The move is in accordance with the Imperial City Protection Plan released in April, and further strengthens the protection of the ancient imperial city, which the government hopes to have listed as a World Cultural Heritage Site.

Covering an area of almost seven square kilometers, the imperial city stretches from Chang'an Avenue in

the south to Ping'an Avenue in the north, and from Beihayan and Nanheyang Dajie in the east to Lingjing Hutong and Fuyou Jie in the west. It encompasses the Forbidden City, Zhongnanhai, Beihai and Jingshan parks and the recently restored Nanchizi.

The plan calls for a gradual reduction in population within the area, the protection, renovation and efficient use of buildings and cultural sites within the area and the elimination of illegal dwellings and modern high-rise buildings, which detract from the harmony of the area.



A piece of wreckage found at the crash site in Yanling County, Hunan Province.

Flying Tiger Grave Rediscovered in Hunan

By Zhang Quansen / Ma Jie / Hou Mingxin

An unmarked tomb in a remote mountainous region of Hunan Province has been confirmed as the burial place of a World War II Flying Tigers pilot. The pilot was killed when his plane crashed after an aerial fight with Japanese aircraft.

Hunan based website www.rednet.com.cn reported November 3 that residents of Guidong County had confirmed witnessing the dogfight and subsequent crash 59 years ago in interviews conducted over the previous two weeks.

These locals expressed the hope that the family of the American hero could be informed and that his remains might be returned to his homeland.

During World War II, a group of US volunteers crossed the Pacific Ocean to support China in the war against Japan. Led by General Claire Lee Chennault, this volunteer group fought heroically against the Japanese air force, and came to be known as the "Flying Tigers" by Chinese people.

According to Xiao Xinghe, former director of the Guidong Cultural Relics Bureau, in the winter of 1944, an air battle between three US fighter planes and an unknown

number of Japanese planes took place near Yanling County. A US plane was shot down and crashed into Bamian Mountain in Guidong County, killing the pilot.

According to records from that time, the plane belonged to an US Air Force group and the dead pilot was an American whose first name was Tom. "Tom" was later buried in Guidong.

The crash site

Last Wednesday, thanks to the recollections of 76-year old Zhong Haiyuan and the guidance of 69-year old Zhong Weishui, two local residents who witnessed the crash, the wreckage of the plane was located in a valley on Bamian Mountain.

According to Zhong Weishui, the plane exploded after crashing into the mountain, burning the surrounding vegetation. Zhong, then 10 years old, had gone to the wreckage site with his father, who was a member of the salvage team.

Fifty-nine years later, the site of the crash was still devoid of vegetation. About 20 meters away, there was a small, roughly built cabin. According to Zhong Weishui, the cabin was used by a sentry posted at the crash site by the local police to stop people approaching the wreck.

Zhong Haiyuan, 76 years old, confirmed this, recalling that as a curious teenager, he had been stopped by a policeman in front of a cabin near

the wreckage site in 1944.

After the plane crash, residents of the nearby village of Wenge were organized to search for and salvage the plane. Zhong Zehua, 79 years old, told reporters last Wednesday, "Since I was thought to be a brave fellow, I was asked to place the dead pilot in a coffin. His body was burned badly, and he was so tall, he almost did not fit in the coffin. In accordance with our local customs, I covered his head with a piece of red cloth. Later, I heard that the government had made a large size coffin for him and buried him beside Wenfeng Tower in Guidong."

Witnesses to the funeral

Hu Zhaozhui, now 86 years old, was an English teacher at Guidong No. 1 Middle School in 1944. Hu witnessed part of the funeral of the American pilot in Guidong.

The funeral was held on a bright morning of a day in September or October. About 100 people participated, including many officials from Guidong County. "The funeral was a very ceremonious affair, there were a lot of firecrackers," Hu recalled.

Hu remembered that the first name of the dead American was Tom, but he has forgotten the surname.

(Continued on page 2)



Hu Zhaozhui (left) and Huang Yunjun, witnesses of the Flying Tiger's funeral, in front of the grave in Guidong. The cross was placed there in October this year.

Photos by Zhang Quanseng

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: ZHANG XIAOXIA EDITOR: HOU MINGXIN
DESIGNER: LI SHI

Banking Sector Opens Further

Regulators announced last Thursday that overseas banks will be allowed to provide renminbi (RMB) services for Chinese enterprises beginning next month.

The China Banking Regulatory Commission said in a statement that effective December 1, foreign financial institutions, subject to CBRC approval, may provide RMB services for domestic enterprises.

Overseas banks can apply to conduct local currency busi-

ness for Chinese companies in regions where foreign financial institutions have already been permitted to offer RMB banking services.

Currently, foreign banks can only provide RMB businesses to foreign-funded enterprises and non-Chinese residents in Shanghai, Shenzhen, Tianjin, Dalian, Guangzhou, Zhuhai, Qingdao, Nanjing and Wuhan.

The CBRC also announced yesterday that it will open four additional mainland cities,

namely Jinan, Fuzhou, Chengdu and Chongqing, for overseas banks to conduct RMB businesses.

“Foreign financial institutions that are already authorized to operate RMB businesses may apply to provide RMB services for Chinese enterprises,” said the statement.

Only overseas banks which have reported profits for two consecutive years prior to the application and meet other requirements, such as good cor-

porate governance, sound risk management and internal controls and efficient controls on money laundering, are qualified to apply for the RMB business, according to the CBRC.

“Upon entry into the WTO, China was committed to allowing foreign financial institutions to provide RMB services for Chinese enter-prises,” said the statement.

“The CBRC will continue to push forward China’s opening up of its banking industry at

a stable pace and remove some geographic and client limits on overseas banks’ RMB businesses,” said the CBRC.

Last Thursday’s announcement came as no surprise to overseas banks operating in China’s mainland.

“We knew that China would open the sector to overseas banks at this time, two years after its entry into the WTO,” said Zhang Dandan, a spokeswoman for the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp.

(Xinhua)

Open Tenders for Olympic Projects Completed

Public tendering for the major 2008 Olympic venues and relevant construction projects has been completed, with the two successful bidders signing contracts last Saturday.

A consortium made up of 11 Chinese and overseas companies won the tender for the National Gymnasium and the Olympic Athletes’ Village, while the bid of the Convention Center went to another consortium, consisting of two local enterprises, Beijing North Star Industrial and Beijing Real Estate Group.

Beijing vice-mayor Liu Jingmin said Saturday’s signing ceremony signals the successful completion of the public tendering for the 2008 Olympics projects.

The organizing committee has already finalized tenders for four other major Olympic projects, the National Swimming Center, the National Stadium, Wukesong Cultural and Sports Complex, and the Olympic Aquatic Park.

These projects demand a total investment of 20.5 billion yuan (US \$2.48 billion), 85 percent of which will be raised through marketing.

“The construction of the four main stadiums will start this December, and most of the projects will get underway next year. All of them will be finished by the end of 2006,” said Liu, who is also vice president of the Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee.

(Xinhua)

Olympic Organizers Target First Group of ‘Partners’

The Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2008 Olympic Games (BOCOG) has targeted the first batch of sponsorship partners, an official announced Wednesday.

Yuan Bin, deputy director of BOCOG’s marketing department, told a press conference that many domestic and foreign enterprises have shown keen interest in sponsoring the 2008 Games since the marketing program was launched in early September.

“We are in the process of selecting the first group of partners,” said Yuan.

“The candidate partners are from the four categories, including auto-makers, banking, fixed telecommunications and mobile communications,” she added.

Yuan also hinted that one domestic

partner is likely to pay as much as the TOP sponsors. TOP sponsors usually pay over US \$50 million to be associated with the Games.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has signed deals with nine of the 12 TOP sponsors backing the Beijing Games worldwide, including Coca-Cola, General Electric and Visa.

Later this year, BOCOG will launch sponsorship programs, which will include Beijing 2008 Partner, Beijing 2008 Sponsor and Beijing 2008 Supplier, according to the organizers.

BOCOG will also manage licensing programs that will authorize companies to produce and sell products bearing the official Olympic logo.

(Xinhua)

Huge Purchasing Contracts Signed in US

By Zhao Hongyi

A Chinese purchasing delegation signed a comprehensive range of purchasing contracts worth US \$6 billion in Washington on November 12.

Contracts signed at the US Department of Commerce include \$1.7 billion for 30 aircraft, mostly Boeing 737s.

The largest contract is for a long-term supply of GE turbine aircraft engines, worth \$3 billion. The engines will be used in the Chinese designed and manufactured ARJ21, a medium sized commercial aircraft servicing regional routes.

On the same day, another Chinese delegation in Detroit purchased 4,500 luxury cars, including Cadillacs, Buicks and other brands, at a price of \$1.3 billion. The contract also covers spare

parts for assembly on General Motors’ car manufacturing lines in Shanghai.

Zhang Guobao, head of the purchasing delegation and deputy director of China’s State Development Planning Commission emphasized at the signing ceremony in Washington that the purchases demonstrated China’s good faith in its determination to off-set the trade surplus with the US.

“But to achieve that, efforts are needed from both sides,” said Zhang, in reference to China’s request that the US relax its control on the export of high-tech products and advanced technologies to China.

Analysts say the purchases are also a measure aimed at creating a good atmosphere for next month’s visit to the US by Premier Wen Jiabao.

PSB Takes Measures to Ease Traffic Congestion

By Brown Zhang

The Beijing Public Security Bureau of Traffic Administration is adopting new measures aimed at relieving the city’s worsening traffic congestion. The measures were announced at a press conference last Friday.

Vice director of the bureau, Zhai Shuanghe, outlined the new measures, which include adopting advanced technologies to improve traffic administration, publicizing traffic laws and regulations and enforcing traffic laws more strictly, and strengthening parking administration.

Altogether 60 video monitors and 300

inspection spots will be put into use to ensure the rapid reaction capacity of the administration. The bureau will also issue regular traffic forecasts through outdoor information display boards and traffic radio.

Besides extending special routes for public buses by 10 kilometers, the administration also plans to clear the space under some overpasses in order to increase traffic capacity.

The total number of automobiles in Beijing has reached 2.05 million, of which private cars account for 42 percent, or 0.87 million, and the aggregate number of drivers is now 3.16 million.

Slight Price Rise Forecast for Agricultural Products

By Zhang Bo

A report from the Ministry of Agriculture about the current monitoring and early-warning system on prices of agricultural products has been delivered to the decision-making organ of the State Council.

Analysts say that the price monitoring system of agricultural products in some provinces has lagged behind real market fluctuations for the past several months.

Currently, although prices of grain products and cooking oil still maintains a sustained growth, research results from the Institute of Rural Economy Research of the Ministry of Agriculture show there is still an

excess supply of agricultural products, so prices will not rise quickly in the short term.

“Generally speaking, supply and demand of most agricultural products is in equilibrium, and any sudden price rises will be transient,” Han Yijun, researcher from the Institute of Rural Economy Research, told *Business Post* on November 8.

From the beginning of October, prices of some agricultural products began to increase, driven by the rise in price of grain products and cooking oil. Currently, prices of cooking oil are at a record high for recent years in some provinces, such as Shandong, Jiangsu, Henan, Anhui, Zhejiang and Hubei.

Credit System to Rank Enterprises

By Zhao Hongyi

The State Administration of Taxation (SAT) and State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC) are currently establishing a business credit ranking system, under which enterprises will be graded with an A, B, C or D ranking.

The two agencies are collecting enterprises’ records of taxation, business behavior, and assessing their financial and operational strength, according to SAIC administrator Wang Zhongfu, speaking at the World Economic Development Declaration Conference (WEDDC) held on November 6 and 7 in Zhuhai.

Enterprises with higher credit rankings will be entitled to special services

and preferential treatment, such as exemption from annual taxation inspections and automatic business license extension for those enterprises with an A-level ranking. B-ranked enterprises will receive early warnings and suggestions from the agencies, while C-ranked businesses will undergo monitoring and special inspection. Enterprises that receive a D-ranking face having their business licenses revoked.

When asked whether the credit system will extend to foreign invested enterprises, a SAIC official, who requested anonymity, told Beijing Today “since the administrator did not specifically mention this point, the new system should cover all enterprises in China.”



Pieces of wreckage found around the crash site.

Photo by Zhang Quansen

(Continued from page 1)

Huang Yunjun, 79 years old, is a former student of Hu’s, and also witnessed the funeral. He says the pilot was buried beside Wenfeng Tower. His school was also near the tower, and Huang recalls being very impressed by the tomb of the pilot. He said he was quite sure that the site of the unmarked tomb is the place where the American pilot Tom was buried in 1944.

Confirmation of the air battle

Fan Huiguang, 71 years old, was a middle school student in Yanling County in 1944. He still recalls the air battle between three Flying Tigers and Japanese planes above Hengyang, a city near Guidong. Two Flying Tigers were shot down by the Japanese fighters. One crash landed near the town of Ceyuan, Yanling County.

The pilot was rescued by a villager named Zhu Houyi and later taken to an airport in neighboring Jiangxi Province by the local authorities; the other plane crashed into Bamian Mountain, in Guidong County, killing the pilot. In a tele-

phone interview last Friday, Zhu Houyi confirmed that he had helped an American pilot in 1944.

One day in October or November of that year, Zhu says he saw a plane circling in the sky with black smoke pouring from its tail. After about 20 seconds, it crashed into a stream on the mountain near his village.

When Zhu arrived at the crash site, he saw the pilot, who had parachuted from the plane, was caught in a tree about 200 meters away. He helped the pilot get down from the tree and the man showed him a certificate written in Chinese. The certificate identified the pilot as an American and a member of the Flying Tigers.

Zhu stilled remembers how the pilot left his parachute as a gift to Zhong Zixian, a local official who could speak a little English. The American stayed two days in Zhong’s home before he left the village.

Last Saturday, the Information Department of Yanling County CPC committee confirmed Fan and Zhu’s stories in a fax, stating that many of the older people in Yanling recalled the incident.

Public Security Review

In a “100-day winter campaign against crime,” Beijing police cracked 282 break-in theft cases and 24 auto theft cases. The campaign ran from October 21 to November 10.

Analyses of the cases show that most break-ins occurred in the morning and during working hours, with the majority taking place on the outskirts Chaoyang and Haidian districts.

Unenclosed and unguarded building complexes were the most common sites for auto theft to occur. Most thefts took place during the morning, and basic-model Santanas and minibuses bearing environmental protection marks accounted for the majority of stolen autos.

Pickpockets have also been a recent target for local police. Pickpockets mainly operate in shopping-malls, agricultural product markets and on public buses. Over two days last week, anti-pickpocket patrols arrested eight criminals on bus route 740 along the Fourth Ring Road.

(Information from Beijing Public Security Bureau)

New Quarantine System Speeds Airport Arrivals

By Zhang Bo

An automatic recognition entry system was put into use last week at Beijing Capital Airport.

The system can identify entry quarantine certificates automatically, work out related statistics based on recognition results, and signal a variety of information to quarantine officials.

According to *Beijing Evening News*, all checks on entry quarantine certificates at the airport were carried out manually in the past. However, with 10 to 15 thousand incoming passengers per day, manual checking was prone to produce errors.

The automatic recognition system was developed by the Beijing Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau with the help of the Institute of Automation, Chinese Academy of Sciences, with the aim of improving the accuracy of the entry quarantine check.

The newly implemented system has significantly speeded up the entry of arriving passengers at the airport.

New Regulation Standardizes Housing Measurements

By Brown Zhang

From December 1, Beijing’s Administrative Regulation on Urban Real Estate Transfer will take effect, a move long anticipated by house buyers.

According to the regulation, the measurement of the area of a house or apartment put up for sale must be made according to the construction area within the apartment.

The construction area covers three parts: the usable area, the wall area within the apartment and the balcony.

According to the regulation, house sellers must entrust a surveying or mapping agency to measure the construction area within the apartment. Should discrepancies arise, the agency would be held responsible.

With cancellation of the examination and approval procedure and 0.3 percent purchasing fee, house buyers without a Beijing residence permit will enjoy the same treatment as locals from December 1, according to the law.

Beijing Launches English Language Website

By Hou Mingxin

The Beijing Municipal Government launched an English language version of its official website on Wednesday last week. The website, www.ebeijing.gov.cn, contains contact details and information about various government departments; business and investment information, as well as local news, tourism and culture sections and information for foreign residents in Beijing.

According to a press release, the website is intended to serve not just as an English language platform for the issuing of important information by the Beijing government, but also a service platform for the convenience of foreigners in their work, study and life in Beijing.

WTO Hopes China To Bridge Developing, Developed Nations



Supachai Panitchpakdi at the WTO and China 2003 Beijing International Forum held Monday in Beijing

Photo by Photocom

By Hou Mingxin

Supachai Panitchpakdi, director-general of the World Trade Organization, said he hoped China could work as a bridge between developing and developed countries to help facilitate a new round of global trade negotiations.

Supachai made the comments during a speech delivered at the WTO and China 2003 Beijing International Forum, which opened Monday in Beijing. The director-general came to the capital to exchange opinions with Chinese officials on the upcoming new round of WTO trade talks scheduled for December.

Negotiations have been at an impasse following the WTO ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico, in September that failed to yield satisfactory results, largely due to the different demands of developing and developed members.

"More than ever we need China to join in with other members to put the round back on track to move it forward," Supachai said.

He also praised China's economic achievements in the past 20 years and said he

expected the country to become the world's fourth biggest trading nation and third biggest importer by the end of this year.

"That doesn't mean that China is going to step outside of its developing country status. China is still a developing country and we admit to that," said Supachai.

But the director-general said China has a special status, because it is rapidly becoming a very powerful player in international trade. He continued, "We need China's strong role to motivate other acountries to re-engage in the negotiations as soon as they can."

Supachai cited agriculture as one area in which China could exert influence. He said China's efforts in agricultural reform should be communicated to other developing countries.

"If China could convince other developing countries to participate in aggressive liberalization efforts in agriculture, that would send a strong signal to the rest of the community," he added.

Some observers have labeled Cancun a catastrophe,

a view Supachai called "inappropriate".

The director-general said he had been talking to various trade officials since Cancun to try to revive negotiations ahead of the December 15 deadline to set an agenda for next year.

The next round of ministerial level talks have already been dubbed the Doha Development Agenda.

"We view China as an important participant in the Doha Development Agenda," Supachai stated, adding that the WTO respects China's achievements in economic development and the country's maintaining economic openness through its painful institutional adjustments, which could serve as a solid example for other developing nations to follow.

Supachai also expressed concerns about the pushes being made by many countries to establish bilateral and regional trade agreements. He called the trend risky because such arrangements could make trade relations between countries extremely complex.

Lifan Motor Crashes Cigarette Monopoly

By Zhao Hongyi

The tightly controlled monopoly of the domestic tobacco and cigarette industry may soon be punctured by the entry of a wily private business investor.

Lifan, a Chongqing-based motorcycle maker, launched sales of its new line of cigarettes at last month's 94th China Export Commodities Fair, a biannual event held in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province.

In China, cigarettes producers have to register with the State Administration of Tobacco Industry (SATI) and obtain licenses for certain annual production volumes. Few newcomers dare or are able to enter the sector because of the endless administrative procedures and heavy taxes.

Like many other successful domestic enterprises, Lifan is searching for appropriate areas for business diversification to solidify its position and generate new profits. It hopes to sidestep the normal problems of entering the domestic tobacco field by exporting its cigarettes, and towards that aim registered its tobacco marketing company and the Lifan brand in the UK earlier this year.

"We are looking for domestic partners to produce cigarettes under our brand," Yin Mingshan, the group's president, announced at the fair. "We are exporting Li-

fan cigarettes, instead of selling them at home."

The fair ended a success for the new cigarette brand, drawing orders from dozens of purchasers, mostly from developing countries including Syria, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria.

The new face of Lifan has received a generally positive reception from domestic media. "Lifan is paving a new way to promote Chinese cigarettes on the world market, a way that was rarely pursued before now," gushed a report in the Guangzhou-based *Nanfang Metropolitan Daily* on October 31.

According to a SATI research report, Chinese cigarettes accounted for only 1.8 of all global trade in 2002 and domestic tobacco just 3.5 percent of worldwide volume.

However, Lifan's bold plan has also drawn criticism by people worried the company's entrance could break careful restrictions and spark a rush of followers into the tobacco field.

An officer of SATI declined to give any comment on the event, calling Lifan's prospects for entering the industry "impossible." "Lifan's actions could break the monopoly of the domestic tobacco industry," said an administration officer on the condition of anonymity during an interview with *Beijing Today*.

English Testing Just a Phone Call Away

By Sun Ming

Ordinate Corp., an American language assessment provider, introduced its PhonePass Set, a fully-automated spoken English test, at a news conference held in Beijing last Thursday.

"This useful assessment tool is the first automatic test by telephone for people who speak English as a foreign language," said Larry Preiser, Ordinate executive vice president of sales and marketing. "There is a great demand for English learning and testing services in China. Students and employees here need a quick and easy way to assess their spoken English abilities. PhonePass Set testing can just do that."

PhonePass test takers simply have to dial the company's phone number, enter an identification number and then interact with the computerized testing

system for around 10 minutes. After hanging up, users can get their test scores from Ordinate's official website within minutes, according to the company.

"It can be taken at anytime, anywhere, in a matter of minutes and at a lower cost than traditional methods," said Lionel Xu, general manager of United Education Ltd., Ordinate's distribution partner in China.

Ordinate has teamed up with four universities in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu to create PhonePass Set testing centers that will be responsible for proctored administration of the tests. The testing center locations are Beijing Normal University, Shanghai International Studies University, Sichuan University and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies.

Gamer Sues to Get Back Virtual Goods



A deadly virtual babe from the game Redmoon

By James Liu

Li Hongchen, 23, of Hebei Province slapped Beijing-based online game provider Beijing Arctic Ice Science and Technology Development Company with a lawsuit August 4, alleging the company refused to act after some virtual goods he used in one of their games were stolen.

The Beijing People's Court of Chaoyang District did not reach a decision when the first hearing of the case was held on August 27, necessitating a second hearing on November 5. "The final decision will be made within two weeks," said Li Si, a staff member of the court's research office that day. "But it has proven very difficult for both sides to present evidence and China has no laws on virtual property protection. There are no laws that state that virtual property has value and should be protected like real property or assets."

China's online game playing sector is expected to reap 700 million yuan in sales this year, according to the China Internet Network Information Center, meaning this seemingly incidental case could have some very tangible economic effect and influence on consumers' rights in this booming sector.

Li began playing the pay-to-play game *Hongyue* (Redmoon) two years ago under the identities of "Guojiazhuixi" and "Bingxueningshuang", and took both characters to high levels with lots of virtual equipment and money. Then on February 17 this year, Li was shocked to find one of his digital heroes penniless and stripped of all equipment.

He immediately filed a complaint to the game provider, who responded that they would investigate the virtual

crime. They later told Li that his equipment and money had been transferred to another player, the company refused to force that player to return the goods on the grounds that the Redmoon user agreement clearly states they are not responsible for such problems.

Li has refused to accept that reasoning and is demanding he be returned double the lost virtual equipment and money as well as compensation to the tune of 11,000 yuan in real cash for psychological damage and transportation costs.

While it is the first lawsuit filed over a virtual property dispute in China, there have been similar cases in South Korea and Taiwan. In 2001, the ruling of the a district court in Seoul, South Korea led to the enactment of legislation protecting people's virtual property and making it illegal for game providers to control or delete players' property without their expressed permission. Taiwan went even further, classifying all virtual property and characters stored on web servers as electromagnetic records, the theft or damage of which can carry penalties of up to three years imprisonment.

Beijing Today tried to contact Beijing Arctic Ice Science and Technology Development Company, but was told by one employee that the company's leaders were not in Beijing and no comments could be made without their authorization. Further investigation uncovered that the service telephone numbers listed on the company's website are not operational as a result of a recent move to a new office in the Pengrun Building.

China-Italy Alliance to Facilitate Trade and Investment

By Li Xin

The Sino-European Entrepreneur Alliance, a new organization for the promotion of bilateral trade and investment, was launched by businesses from China and Italy on November 5 in Beijing.

The alliance will act as a platform to promote products, services and brands from each country in the other's market, facilitate investment by Chinese enterprises in Italy and Europe and vice versa, and organize fairs and exhibitions.

Citic Union and Asit and Trade SRL (Association Sino Italy Transregional), the two companies that created the alliance, have announced that they plan to organize an Italian commodities exhibition in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province next October.

China Netcom Preparing for IPO

By Zhao Hongyi

China Netcom (CNC), this country's largest broadband Internet service provider, is set to hold IPOs on the domestic market and abroad as early as the first half of next year, according to the company's CEO, Edward Tian.

Tian disclosed Netcom's IPO ambitions on Monday in Beijing while announcing CNC's new round of business adjustments. The company is dividing its business into three sectors, CNC North, CNC South, and CNC International. Tian has been named president of CNC International.

According to a report in *Beijing Youth Daily* on Monday, CNC has appointed a working group to contact potential underwriters for a clearance of its assets to see which are suitable for the public offering.

Harvard Forum Held in Capital

By Charles Zhu

A Harvard Forum, the sixth in a series run under the joint auspices of the Harvard Beijing Club and Zhejiang Province-based Xiandai Joint Holdings Group, was held at the Guobin Hotel in Beijing on November 6.

The forum focused on the development of the logistics industry in China and attracted a huge audience comprised mainly of managers of major logistics companies, other business people and scholars.

The aim of the event was finding ways to streamline modern logistical services as a catalyst for drawing foreign capital investment and promoting the growth of e-commerce in the increasingly competitive environment since China's entry into the World Trade Organization.

Hong Jingnan, honorary vice-president of the club and vice-chairman of the Chinese Logistics and Purchasing Association, gave a speech about business opportunities in the burgeoning domestic logistics industry and development trends in the field.

In another address, Alfred Pang, general manager of International Fast Transit, a Chinese partner of international logistics giant UPS, expounded on some new ideas concerning the industry and talked about business integration and balanced exchange of goods, information and capital between sellers and the buyers.

Oracle Sets up Second CDC in Beijing

Software giant Oracle opened its second China Development Center (CDC) in Beijing earlier this month. The new unit will work closely with the company's partners to develop new IT solutions specifically for the local market, according to a press release issued by the company.

The company's first CDC was set up in Shenzhen in June 2002.

On the same day, Oracle Japan inaugurated the opening of its China Business Development Unit in Shanghai. The organization will support Oracle-owned companies in Japan to explore business in China, as the corporation is "eager to extend business to China and seek quick and smooth progress," Oracle stated in its press release.

(PR News)

Workshop Evaluates Domestic Business Arbitration

By Zhao Hongyi

China has become an ideal place for business dispute arbitration, mainly because of its flexibility of procedures, respect of parties' autonomy, efficient enforcement, confidentiality and the growing ranks of professional arbitrators.

Those were the conclusions reached by the attendants at the 2003 Arbitration Workshop held in Beijing last Monday. However, they also agreed that several key issues need to be resolved, including the binding requirement for local arbitration commissions in disputes involving Chinese parties.

"This generates a negative image for China," said Wang Shengchang, vice chairman of China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) at the seminar.

The workshop was jointly held by the International Chamber of Commerce (China), CIETAC and the French law firm Coudert Brothers.



(Reuters Photo)

WTO Panel Says US Steel Duties Illegal

Geneva, November 10 (AP) - A World Trade Organization appeals panel ruled Monday that US duties on imported steel introduced last year are illegal, and the European Union is threatening to retaliate with \$2.2 billion in sanctions unless Washington lifts the tariffs swiftly.

The White House quickly disputed the decision by the panel, which rejected the bulk of the US appeal seeking to strike down a July ruling that the duties break WTO rules.

"We disagree with the overall WTO report and we are going to study it and look at its implications and go from there," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said. He would not offer a timetable for a White House decision on whether to rescind the tariffs.

"We believe (the duties) are fully consistent with WTO rules and we will carefully review those decisions."

The WTO issued its initial July ruling after a complaint from the 15-member European Union and seven other nations, including China. In a joint statement Monday, those nations said Washington has "no choice" but to remove the import duties without delay.

The appeals panel upheld the major findings of the July report which said that the United States failed to prove that its industry had been harmed by a sudden flood of cheap imports - a condition for imposing such duties under WTO rules.

European Union trade chief Pascal Lamy, in an interview with Dow Jones Newswires, said the EU could impose sanctions on US imports within weeks if Washington fails to drop the duties. Other countries also could join in.

The EU is threatening to impose up to \$2.2 billion of sanctions on US imports - ranging from cigarettes to frozen veg-

etables to paper products - by introducing 100 percent duties, effectively pricing the goods out of the EU market.

To increase political pressure, many of the products on which the EU may slap sanctions are produced in swing states that would be crucial to Bush's re-election campaign next year.

The White House also is facing heavy political pressure in the dispute, especially from steel-producing states such as Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio, to keep the tariffs in place.

Brussels says it will start retaliating if the US steel duties are still in place five days after the report has been formally adopted by the WTO, which would likely be at the end of November.

(Naomi Koppel)

Comments:

It's the first time China has participated in a formal trade dispute settle-

ment within the WTO and we played an important role in this case. The fair sentence indicates that China can and will play a constructive role in the trade organization.

Unfortunately, Chinese enterprises have not yet realized the importance and were not as active as their counterparts in the other countries and regions. We still have a lot to learn.

— **Zhang Yuqing, director general, department of legal affairs, ministry of commerce**

Due to the US high tariffs imposed on steel imports, a huge amount of steel on the world market entered China's market.

In other words, China contributed a lot to the world steel industry and market and risked being damaged by US protectionism.

— **Zhang Hanlin, WTO scholar, University of International Business and Economics**

Vajpayee Defends Reform Progress

New Delhi, November 7 (AFP) - Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said India remained fully committed to economic reforms despite delays in privatization caused by the courts and members of his coalition.

"The short point is that there is no weakening in India's commitment to the reform process," Vajpayee told the Financial Times of London in an interview published Friday.

"Those who make critical comments about the pace of our reforms should remember that this vast country accommodates a diversity of perspectives," said Vajpayee, whose government faces parliamentary polls within a year.

The Supreme Court in September halted the privatization of two state-run oil firms, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum, unless the deal is approved by parliament.

The sell-offs of the two companies had already been slow due to opposition from Hindu hardliners and socialists in Vajpayee's unwieldy coalition of two-dozen parties.

"I do not accept that our reform process has been 'stop-go' in nature. It is natural - and beneficial for the durability of reforms - that the process should move forward on the basis of broad consultations and reconciliation," Vajpayee said.

Last year India received only about 28 percent of a targeted 120 billion rupees (US\$2.66 billion) in privatization revenue.

Analyst's Take:

India has advantages and disadvantages in its economic development.

Further education in India is advanced, as are open-minded teaching concepts and methods. But India is poor in terms of basic education.

The software industry is sophisticated but the hardware manufacturing industry is weak.

The caste system in India is also deeply rooted and while this provides stability it also keeps millions of people locked into low social status.

Indians are proud of their democratic system but sometimes it disrupts the implementation of economic policies.

The Indian government has three fundamental things to do, if it really wants to spur economic development: open up to the outside world; reinforce basic education; and promote the process of industrialization, particularly manufacturing industries at present.

— **Wei Houkai, senior researcher, Chinese Academy of Social Science**



United States Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore unveils new nickel designs at the US Mint Headquarters November 6, in Washington DC. The newly designed nickel will have two designs honoring the Lewis and Clark expedition and the Louisiana Purchase. The coins will be in circulation in 2004.

Photo by Photocom

Cooperation in Korea

Seoul, November 7 (AFP) - A South Korean delegation has finished talks with North Korea on reconciliation and economic cooperation as diplomatic efforts were renewed to set up another round of nuclear crisis talks.

South Korea's chief delegate, Kim Gwang-Lim, said in a statement that discussions included the year-long crisis over the North's nuclear weapons program.

"I stressed that progress should be made to solve the nuclear issue and other pending problems," he said.

The four-day meeting in Pyongyang also covered economic cooperation, relinking cross-border railways severed during the 1950-1953 Korean War and an industrial park under construction in the North's border city of Kaesong.

The two sides have agreed to reconnect the railways by the year's end.

South Korean delegates visited a food distribution center near Pyongyang. In May, Seoul agreed to send 400,000 tons of rice to the North, of which 290,000 tones has already been delivered.

South Korea has also promised to send 100,000 tons of free fertilizer aid worth \$26.6 million to the North, on top of 200,000 tons sent so far this year.

North Korea has relied on outside handouts to feed its 22 million people since a series of natural disasters caused widespread famine in the mid-1990s.

Analyst's Take:

Since South Korean president Kim Dae-jung visited the north in 2000, economic cooperation and exchanges have been increasing, though difficulties and obstacles exist.

The South believes that the two

Koreas are of the same nationality and that the political and military tensions in the Korean peninsula are the heritage from the Cold War and should be thrown into history.

But the South's approach is disrupted from time to time by the Bush administration's hard line towards the North, the political turmoil in the South, and decreasing enthusiasm among investors.

Economic cooperation with the South is an important issue in the North. That explains why the North started economic reforms last year. But the reforms are still in their infancy.

What needs to be emphasized is that the North has been serious and sincere in its economic cooperation with the South.

— **Chen Yujie, senior researcher on Northeast Asian Studies, China Institute of Contemporary International Relations**

Analyst's Take:

Last month, Microsoft spent \$200 million on the settlement of anti-trust cases in ten states, but still has unsettled cases in another five states.

Due to the anti-trust suits and quality concerns in the market, partly relating to recent virus problems, orders received by Microsoft in the third quarter this year have fallen by \$768 million.

As the company is developing, cases and complaints will always accompany it. The cases in Europe and at home are not the first, and will not be the last.

— **O'Neil Ning, market analyst, Computer Business Information Service Group**

First Private Afghan Airline Takes Off



Afghanistan's first private airline, KamAir, has launched operations with a domestic flight linking Kabul with northern provincial capital Mazar-i-Sharif and the main western city of Herat.

AFP Photo

Kabul, November 9 (AFP) - Afghanistan's first private airline, KamAir, has launched operations with two Boeing 727 jets on domestic flights between Kabul and Herat, the official Bakhtar news agency said on Saturday.

The company will add two more Australian-made Nomad N24 planes in coming weeks.

KamAir, set up with a three million dollar investment by Afghan businessmen, plans to add international flights in the near future.

Egypt Reports Biggest Gas Find

Cairo, November 6 (AFP) - The state-owned Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Company said a gas field recently discovered by US company Apache Corporation has been appraised as the biggest in the country's western desert.

Apache said that an appraisal well has boosted the potential of the field to between one trillion and three trillion cubic feet (28.3 billion and 85 billion cubic meters) of gas, and 20 million to 70 million barrels of condensate.

Egypt - one of the world's top 20 gas producers - has seen its known natural gas reserves increase steadily over the past 10 years, reaching 1.6 trillion cubic meters (58.5 trillion cubic feet) in October last year.

Russia Fears \$13bn Capital Flight After Yukos

Moscow, November 7 (FT.com) - Russia is expecting a net private capital flight of more \$13bn in the last six months of this year, in contrast to the first half of the year, when a net \$4.6bn flowed into the country, the first sustained private capital inflow since the collapse of communism.

The crisis caused by the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, and the attack on the Yukos oil company has contributed to the reversal of the positive trend.

(Arkady Ostrovsky)

Bertelsmann, Sony to Merge Music Business

Los Angeles, November 6 (AP) - Sony and Bertelsmann AG said last Thursday they planned to merge their music businesses.

The merger would bring together the world's No. 2 and No. 5 music companies at a time when the recording industry is struggling to stem a three-year slide in CD sales and cope with the impact digital technology and the Internet have had on its business model.

The new company, to be called Sony BMG, would be equally owned by Sony and Bertelsmann. But the deal has to win approval from US and European regulators.

(Alex Veiga)

Oracle Revises Lawsuit Against PeopleSoft



PeopleSoft headquarters in Pleasanton, California. Reuters Photo

New York, November 11 (Reuters) - Oracle revised its lawsuit against PeopleSoft, warning that PeopleSoft's latest customer rebate program could make it prohibitively expensive for the world's second largest software company to complete its \$7.3 billion hostile takeover bid.

Oracle claimed in court papers that the rebate plan, which doubles as an anti-takeover measure, flouts responsible corporate governance and entrenches its board in a ploy to thwart the deal, which Oracle launched earlier this year.

(Jeffrey Goldfarb)

Clinton Talks about AIDS at Tsinghua

By James Liu

Former US President Bill Clinton delivered a speech on global efforts to prevent and control HIV/AIDS on November 10 as part of a one-day summit meeting on HIV/AIDS in China held at Tsinghua University in Beijing. The event was cosponsored by the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center (ADARC) and Chinese AIDS Initiative (CAI).

During his 40-minute speech,

Clinton called for all the world to pay closer attention to the disease and encouraged developed countries to help each other through transfers of technology and medical research in the hopes "they could bring cheaper medicine to China and the whole of Asia."

Then Clinton answered audience questions. A girl of around 10 asked the former president when he first heard of HIV or AIDS and when is an appropriate time for

children to learn about the disease. He responded that he has kept informed about HIV and AIDS since the first AIDS case was identified in 1981. In answering the second question, Clinton said that children old enough to really absorb information about HIV/AIDS, such as at the age when they can conduct sexual behavior, should learn about the disease.

Just before the end of the event, a young man in dark green sweater



Former US President Bill Clinton praised Song Pengfei, China's first HIV carrier to go public, for his courage. Xinhua Photo

stood up and said, "I am 21 and I have been a HIV carrier for six years," following up with questions about levels of AIDS understanding in the US and the American government's attitude towards condom advertising.

Clinton proceeded to invite the young man, Song Pengfei, China's first HIV carrier to go public, up to the stage. "I want to thank you for standing up and announcing in front of all these people that you

were infected," he said. "You have done a big favor for everybody in this room and for this country today by having the courage to stand up and say what you did, and I thank you."

Song Pengfei now lives in Beijing and is seeking treatment. He has also launched a lawsuit against the Linfen Second People's Hospital in Shanxi Province, where he contracted the disease from a transfusion of infected blood.

American Mother Back to Save Adopted Daughter

By Sun Ming

At a news conference held in Beijing on Monday, American Linda Wells appealed to the public for help for her adopted Chinese daughter, who suffers from severe aplastic anemia, a rare disease in which bone marrow fails to produce sufficient red blood cells.

It is the second time that Wells has come to China to try to find a bone marrow donor for her seven-year-old daughter Kailee. She was unable to find a suitable donor in her first trip this February.

"I understand it is very difficult, but we have to try everything," said Wells, "China gave my daughter life, and now I must ask you to give her life again."

Wells adopted Kailee, who was abandoned when 10 days old, from Changde, Hunan Province in 1997. Kailee was diagnosed with aplastic anemia at the age of five and the only chance for her to live is to receive a bone marrow transplant.

Her doctors have checked bone marrow registries worldwide, involving over eight million potential donors, but have not been able to locate a suitable match. Wells was told that the best chances for a marrow match would come from a member of Kailee's biological family or somebody of Chinese ethnic origin.

However, according to a statement made by the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) on Monday, the chance of finding a perfect match for Kailee are slim. Of the over 82,000 samples in RCSC's bone marrow bank, 15 samples have been proven to be near matches based on preliminary serology typing, but those samples may only be theoretically helpful.

"Finding the right match will be like looking for a needle in a haystack. But if more people get their blood tested and have their names listed on the registry, the better our chances will be of making a match," said Hong Junling, director of the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Donor Program Administration Center under the RCSC.

According to the RCSC, the number of donors on the Chinese bone marrow registry has surged from 50,000 in February to 82,000 at present.

"The first time I was here, my concern was solely to find a match for Kailee," said Wells, "But now I know that there are so many people that are waiting and going to die without a transplant. Our mission now is different."

After her Beijing trip, Wells will go to Changde, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taiwan and countries with large Chinese populations such as Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India and Canada to continue her quest. Wells is scheduled to return to the US on December 23.



Linda Wells holds a picture of her seven-year-old daughter Kailee.

Photo by Cai Daizheng



Photo by Wang Wei

Here She Is, Miss China...

By Wang Xiaoxiao

Last Saturday evening, the first Miss China Pageant, sponsored by Phoenix TV, was held at Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center. Shanghai native Jiang Xinrong, 20, (center) was given the crown. The runner-up was Hu Guyue of Jilin Province (left) and Gu Yu from Heilongjiang Province (right) came in third.

Sex Bed Raises Eyebrows and More

By Hans Leu

A controversial new bed, called the Xing'aichuang, which translates directly to "bed for perfecting sex," has made a splash on the Beijing market this month, with demonstrations and sales of the racy product launched at a few markets on the outskirts of the city. Though there has been no real marketing thrust for the bed, sales have proven strong, with more than 10 units purchased last week.

On Tuesday, a salesperson at the Daxiong Trading Center in the Beijing Economic and Technological Development Area (BDA), told *Beijing Today*, "The bed is a multi-functional device manufactured by Shanghai Daya Mechanic and Electric Company. Its auxiliary function of enhancing the sexual experience is one of its most important selling points."

The clerk, who requested her name not be used, added, "Most buyers are employees at foreign-owned enterprises in the development area, so they are well paid enough and have enough space at home to accommodate the large beds, which go for around 88,000 yuan a piece."

Liu Wei, another salesperson at that store, said, "The bed offers more than just sexual functions. Customers can enjoy all kinds of comfort and convenience from it every day."

Among the huge bed's 33 functions and devices are massagers, a liquid crystal TV, radio, reading lamp, alarm clock, telephone, DVD system, dinner table and safe. Its sex-related functions come from a series of mechanical lifts and rollers that cause the center of the bed to swell in a wave-like motion.

One young man at the store in the Daxiong Trading Center put his hand on the oscillating hump and grinned in surprise.

"I would not buy this kind of bed," he said to *Beijing Today*. "First, it's too expensive. Second, I am not sure whether



The Xing'aichuang, or 'bed for perfecting sex' is purported to be able to 'put more motion in the ocean.'

Photo by Cao Boyuan

it would actually be able to improve sex as they have claimed. Finally, I would not want to risk getting injured if the mechanisms break down while operating."

Fang Yaolun, head of a domestic electronic appliance research center in Changsha, Hunan Province and creator of the pneumatic bed, invented it with the aim of relieving the chronic pain in his neck and back he has suffered for over two years. When he tested the bed, though, he found that its motion could offer aid to couples seeking added spice in their lovemaking.

Taxi driver Li Ran, 32, told *Beijing Today* that even if the bed could improve sexual performance, few Chinese families would be receptive to such a unit. "Many Chinese couples live with their children and parents," he explained. "Even if they take the bed home, they would have to lock their rooms and keep the kids out for fear of negatively affecting their children or being criticized by their parents."

Liu Xiangyu, 27, owner of a local health care shop, opined, "Few Chinese families could accept such a bed. It is too expensive and too big for the tight spaces of most local homes. Mostly importantly, people would be embarrassed if their friends found they had such a thing in their bedrooms. You know, sex is still a relatively taboo subject in China."

Yet Liu Wei remains up about the bed's prospects, saying, "Aside from Beijing people's strong consumption ability, the large number of hotels here has attracted us to the capital."

Government Says No to Public Body Painting

By Guo Yuandan

The Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Public Security and State Administration for Industry and Commerce have issued a joint declaration banning public body painting, according to a Xinhua report last Friday.

That notice stipulates that organizations or individuals cannot use nude or partially-nude human bodies in advertising or publicity activities. That change will stem a recent nationwide trend of body painting performances held in public to attract consumers to certain shops or products.

The governments of Shanghai and Guangdong and Jiangxi Provinces have issued their own documents prohibiting public body painting, according to a Sina.com report.

Zhu Xianlong, who held the first body photography exhibition in the Chinese mainland in 2001, was quoted in the Guangdong-based *Southern Metropolitan Daily* on November 7 as saying, "Some organizers hold body painting exhibitions in public just in pursuit of commercial profit. Such activities have transformed a type of art into cheap erotic performances."

First Local Sexual Harassment Case Dismissed

By Wang Xiaoxiao

The first sexual harassment lawsuit in the capital, filed by a 25-year-old woman, Lei Man, was dismissed by the Haidian District People's Court on November 6.

The court dismissed Lei's charges on grounds that she did not provide sufficient evidence to prove that her former work supervisor, Jiao Bin, 30, had sexually harassed her six times within three months in 2001. At the time, Jiao was the head of the Commercial Photo Department of Founder Aode Company, a subsidiary of the Beijing University Founder Group. According to the court, testing of Lei's mental state indicated she was suffering from paranoia.

The court also rejected Jiao's counter-suit charging Lei with slander.

Community Comment

Honoring Our Rural Heritage

By Virginia Fumiyo Anami

As Beijing's urban development spreads into rural areas, village communities are facing tremendous changes and many are at risk of disappearing altogether. This is definitely the time to take a close look at Beijing's old villages, whose presence and survival is vital to the fabric of this municipality's society.

Stretching from the plains to the mountains, Beijing's villages all have their own special and different characteristics. Some originated as coal mining or trading villages, while others quarried stone, sold kindling or functioned as post towns, guardians of tombs or defenders of mountain, river and canal crossings. Villages also grew up around important temples or tea stalls along major roads or pilgrim paths.

A few villages were even founded by imperial decree to serve as builders of forts or producers of pottery and tiles. Such great variety in the rural scene around the capital reflects not only the diverse geographical landscape, but also the importance these hamlets had in the history of Beijing.

More than anything, these villages are their people. It is the villagers who have preserved their stories and passed them down as oral history, who have built and rebuilt their homes and who have perpetuated crafts and special livelihoods. Their tradition of cooperation in digging wells, repairing roads and guarding trees at sacred sites have been and remain essential to their senses of community.

As a way of honoring the villages of Beijing and shining light on their fragility, myself and three other photographers held an exhibition of our photographs at the Beijing Capital Museum last weekend.

Today, there are many challenges facing the survival of ancient villages and their traditional cultures. Urban expansion, modernization, water shortages and migration to cities are taking their toll on village life. With so many villages disappearing so quickly, my colleagues and I want to share their essence with our images to try to keep some of their meaning and soul alive.

The author is the wife of the Japanese ambassador to China and likes to explore Beijing's rural areas.

A photograph of a traditional Chinese courtyard. On the left is a red building with a large, ornate wooden door. To the right, a large, leafy green vine-covered trellis arches over the courtyard. Two wicker chairs are positioned under the trellis. The ground is paved with reddish-brown tiles. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daytime.

By Zhao Hongyi

At 4:40 am on November 3, heavy smoke started pouring out of an eight-story residential building in the small Xuanting Village of Zhuhui District, in Hengyang, Hunan Province.

At 5:10 am, 160 firefighters from Hengyang Fire Company arrived at the scene. All 412 residents of the building were swiftly evacuated, but the fire was growing stronger.

By 8:30 am the fire had climbed to the second and third floors. Though the firefighters were using high-pressure squirt guns to extinguish the flames, the heat of the inferno could be felt some distance from the building. The cement structure was starting to crack, with debris spitting from the walls.

The media soon arrived. Astonished by-passers on their to their work stopped, watching and whispering. Policemen and government officials were busy directing transportation nearby.

The unexpected

At 8:37 am, with a huge boom, the eight-story building collapsed, burying 21 firefighters and four reporters in the rubble.

The fire was not extinguished until 12:00 am. Twenty-seven hours later, the first and only survivor of the 21 firefighters, Jiang Cunmao, a squad leader, was found and saved. The bodies of the other 20 men were found in the next two days. The four reporters had been found quickly and sent to hospital at once.

"When I was photographing at the site, I suddenly realized how lovely these young men were," murmured Xu Changguo, a senior photographer for *Hengyang Daily*, in his bed in a local hospital. "Never before had I been so moved."

National mourning

November 9 is the National Fire Day. This year, the day took on a special importance.

More than 20,000 people gathered early on Sunday morning in Chuanshan Square, Hengyang to mourn the 20 men who died in the worst fire fighting disaster since 1949.

The parents, brothers, sisters and relatives of the men were all present at the service in Hengyang. Xue Jiyong, father of Xue Xianglin, hid his tears in front of the cameras saying only "I feel proud of my dear son."

"May you rest in peace, my dear fellow soldiers," choked Yang Youliang, officer of Hengyang city fire company.

Around the country 120,000 other firefighters mourned their comrades.

Honors and compensation

The twenty men were named "martyrs" by the Ministry of Public Security at the mourning ceremony. President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao expressed their condolences.

Minister of public security Zhou Yongkang and acting governor of Hunan Province Zhou Bohua hosted the memorial service in Hengyang on Sunday morning.

Each family of the deceased received 300,000 yuan compensation from China Life Insurance, and another 200,000 yuan from the central government.

A nationwide donation campaign also started. In Beijing, 200,000 yuan was collected from 4,000 firefighters to be sent to Hengyang for

A Hero from Beijing

By Chen Ying

A Beijinger, Zhang Hu, was among the firefighters who lost their lives in Hunan last week.

The 20-year-old soldier was from Beidianzi Village in Miyun County. He joined the army last December and was later sent to Hunan to join a local firefighting division.

Village leader Zhang Xinwang recalled that Zhang had gained admission to a local university but he wanted to join the army first. "Zhang said he wanted to be a soldier for two years and then go to college. He wanted to ease his family's financial burden since he also has a 16-year-old sister in school."

Zhang Hu's Chinese teacher in high school, Sun Zhaoguo, said Zhang had always been ready to help others. "Actually his family does not have much money. But he was willing to give someone money



Fire Disaster Heroes Remembered



Xinhua Photo

'When I was photographing at the site, I suddenly realized how lovely these young soldiers were. Never before had I been so deeply moved.'
— Xu Changguo, senior photographer of Hengyang Daily

the families of the men.

A monument will be built at the site of the collapsed building in memory of the dead firefighters.

Investigation begins

The cause of the fire was soon clear. Most of the families in the building were vendors doing business in the three nearby markets. The first floor was used as a warehouse for commodities, most of which were made out of plastic.

"These residents make their living selling dried foods like fish, shrimps and jujubes," a witness watching nearby told the local newspaper, *Dangdai Business News*. "They use electric fans to dry the commodities throughout the night."

It appears this is how the fire started. But the investigation is going further. The investigators' eyes are focusing now on the quality of the eight-story building.

Dai Jianping, vice chairman of Yongxing Group, a local property developer and the con-

structor of the building, arrived at the site on the morning of November 3. He insisted the reason for the collapse was the fire, not the quality of the building. "It's like the World Trade Center in New York. Who could imagine the twin towers would collapse?"

But the investigation has already uncovered some alarming problems. The building went on sale before any authoritative quality inspection was conducted. Secondly, in the project approval document, the building was described as a six-floor block with a total area of 5,809 square meters. But the building had eight floors and 9,300 square meters.

"That's no big deal," said Dai. "It's common in the property industry for the figures to be wrong. Developers use this method to save fees in the approval process. That way they can earn more profits."



Fire fighters search for survivors.

if they needed it."

Zhang Hu wrote to his parents during his time in the army saying he was happy about his decision. "I feel good even though I'm really busy. Trust me, I will succeed."

"He was really a good soldier," said Yang Dan, one of Zhang Hu's colleagues in the army.

Zhang's parents came back from Hengyang on Monday afternoon with Zhang's ashes after attending the ceremony in honor of the men who had given their lives.

"We'll try our best to help Zhang's family," a spokesman for Miyun County Government told *Beijing Morning Post* on Monday.

China Purges Poison

By James Liu

A nationwide campaign to prevent the sale and production of tetramine-based rat poison was launched earlier this month following the latest case of poisoning involving the highly toxic chemical. On October 20, ten people died in Lichuan, Hubei Province, after eating rice that had been infected with tetramine.

From now on, people involved in the illegal production, processing, trade, distribution and storage of tetramine will face severe punishment, even the death penalty, according to a ruling jointly issued by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate which went into effect from October 1.

This war against tetramine has not appeared out of nowhere. In fact, China has been trying to get rid of the chemical for 19 years. But it's remained popular, partly because it's cheap to produce, powerful and because government bodies have failed to coordinate their activities or to spread word of just how deadly it is. The government has found new resolve to tackle the problem following the deaths of 52 people in the first half of this year from tetramine poisoning.

What is tetramine?

Tetramine, or tetramethylene disulfotetramine, first appeared in the US in 1949 and China started producing it in 1958. Tetramine affects all warm blooded creatures. It is 100 times more toxic than potassium cyanide and five milligrams of tetramine can kill an adult in several minutes. It is an effective poison as it has no strong taste or smell and can hardly be detected when mixed with food. Another thing that makes tetramine dangerous is

that it does not decompose easily and remains virulent for some time.

Why the ban?

Tetramine can cause mass death, especially in criminal cases. Such incidents have been widely reported across the nation. The best known recent case involved a snack bar owner in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. He was arrested in May this year after contaminating the food of a business rival with tetramine, killing 38 people and leaving hundreds seriously ill.

A less newsworthy reason is that tetramine is not particularly effective in its intended application, that of killing rats. Professor Wang Chengxin, an expert in rat research, says only older and younger rats who have difficulty in finding food will try bait infected with the poison. Also, quick acting poison only kills one or two rats as the others will be alerted by seeing the dead rats next to the bait. Slower acting rat poison can control rats more effectively.

Why is it still available?

The authorities have confiscated and destroyed a total of 33 tons of tetramine across China since July. Change County in Henan Province, Lixin County in Anhui Province, and Xiantao City in Hubei Province appear to be the three major tetramine supply centers providing as much as 95 percent of the tetramine in China. But the amount of tetramine produced in rural areas is still unknown.

Deputy minister of Ministry of Agriculture Fan Xiaoqian admitted that eradicating tetramine would be a hard task as it has spread throughout the country over many years. "Especially in mountainous areas where transportation and infor-

mation systems are less developed, a lot of people don't know how harmful it is," said the deputy minister.

Also, as tetramine production does not need significant investment or modern technology and offers healthy returns, people are still drawn to producing it illegally, using different packaging to sell it.

Another reason is that China lacks an effective management system for supervising rat poison production. In the past, the Ministry of Agriculture, the State Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision, the State Administration of Industry and Commerce, and the Ministry of Health have all been involved in clamping down on tetramine production, distribution and management. But lack of cooperation between these bodies has hampered their efforts. "Some local governments also neglect the importance of tetramine control," Fan Xiaoqian told Xinhua News Agency reporters.

Tighten controls

There's still a lot of work to be done to get rid of tetramine in China. The Food and drug safety supervision departments have been required to tighten quality standards and supervision methods, making sure the production, processing, distribution and sales of food and drugs are managed properly.

And to solve the problem from the root, scientific measures are needed to deal with the problem of rats. Short-term measures usually cause an imbalance of local bio-systems and therefore will hurt human beings in the long run. Scientists are looking at methods such as biotechnology and introducing rats' enemies in the food chain to control them.

1	2	3	4	5	11	12	13	14	15
6	7	8	9	10	16	17	18	19	20

1. **Zhang Xiaocheng**, 39, commissar, Hengyang Fire Company.
2. **Dai Hexi**, 41, deputy chief of staff, Hengyang Fire Company.
3. **Zhao Kanglin**, 28, leader, Yanfeng Fire Platoon.
4. **Zhong Linlin**, 29, leader, Shigu Fire Platoon.
5. **Chen Guihua**, 28, assistant leader, Shigu Fire Platoon.
6. **Nie Xuemin**, 23, acting assistant leader, Yanfeng Fire Platoon.
7. **Fang Weiping**, 24, leader, first squad, Yanfeng Fire Platoon.
8. **Guo Binghua**, 24, leader, second squad, Zhuhui Fire Platoon.
9. **Liu Changyao**, 23, leader, second squad, Shigu Fire Platoon.
10. **He Huadong**, 21, assistant leader, second squad, Zhuhui Fire Platoon.
11. **Zhan Xianbo**, 22, private, second squad, Zhuhui Fire Platoon.
12. **Zeng Hui**, 21, leader, second squad, Special Task Platoon.
13. **Liu Qingdong**, 20, private, first squad, Zhuhui Fire Platoon.
14. **Peng Guohui**, 21, private, first squad, Yanfeng Fire Platoon.
15. **Xue Xianglin**, 21, clerk, Shigu Fire Platoon.
16. **Guo Tieniu**, 20, private, second squad, Special Task Platoon.
17. **Zhang Shang**, 22, acting assistant instructor, Zhuhui Fire Platoon.
18. **Li Daiwei**, 20, private, second squad, Shigu Fire Platoon.
19. **Zhou Zhongjun**, 18, private, second squad, Shigu Fire Platoon.
20. **Zhang Hu**, 20, private, first squad, Zhuhui Fire Platoon.

By Ma Ning/Liu Li/Jiang Hao

In previous Olympic Games, volunteers have played a vital role as image ambassadors, demonstrating the good spirit and grace of the host countries. Some say the success or failure of the games rests on the volunteers.

For such a large-scale activity as the Olympic Games, the number of volunteers required has steadily increased. The Athens Organizing Committee (ATHOC) expects to make room for 60,000 of them. They'll have a tough act to follow. The volunteers at the Sydney Olympics in 2000 won unanimous praise from the international community. So how are the preparations going in Athens?

How many?

The Athens Olympics are expected to draw a record number of volunteers. In 1992, the Barcelona Olympics recruited 34,548 volunteers. In 1996, 40,422 volunteers participated in the Atlanta Games. In Sydney, the number was 47,000. ATHOC is casting its net even wider. The Athens Olympic Games will need about 45,000 volunteers and the subsequent Olympic Games for the Handicapped will need 15,000.

Indeed, 60,000 is just the number of volunteers needed each day. They'll work in shifts so ATHOC will actually need to sign up around 150,000 volunteers in total.

Volunteers willing to pay their way

It's common practice at the games for volunteers to pay their way and find their own accommodation. The good news is that the most recent statistics showed over half of the applicants have stated they can find places to live in Greece without any difficulty.

The organizers are confident they'll be able to get high caliber volunteers. Mr. Hytiris, Vice Minister of Press and Media, told reporters that more than 120,000 people all over the world have applied to be volunteers. According to ATHOC, over half of these are natives of Greece and many of the rest are drawn from the large overseas Greek diaspora. Of all the foreign applicants, people from Cyprus account for the largest proportion. For this reason ATHOC set up special training programs in Cyprus.

Performers please

Volunteers will be needed in nearly all the fields, such as administration, various kinds of ceremonies, communications and liaison, energy conservation, IT, tourist reception, international relations, translation, news release, security and health services. Just in the field of medicine, the Athens Olympics need over 3,000 volunteers who must be qualified, either in first-aid or as doctors and nurses.

ATHOC has begun to recruit performers for the opening and the closing ceremony. On August 13, 2004, 8,000 performers and 2,000 artistic professionals will be needed for the opening ceremony. All these people will be recruited. Any volunteer who fills in "ceremony" in the column of "interest" is likely to be chosen to perform at both of the ceremonies.

There's less than a year to go before the Olympics begin but the performers for the opening ceremony have not been decided yet, causing a degree of anxiety amongst some people. However, ATHOC does not seem worried. We learned that the work of interviewing the applicants for the opening and closing ceremonies will begin soon. To prevent volunteers from being absent from the two most important occasions, ATHOC emphasized in its statement, "Compared with other voluntary service, the performance at the opening ceremony and the closing ceremony requires the volunteers to be more time-conscious. However, you will find it very beneficial and interesting to participate in these activities."

Training days

Currently, ATHOC is in close touch with 339 domestic and over 800 volunteers' organizations. Through its official website, ATHOC announced the various ways to apply to be a volunteer: by internet, mail or phone. The volunteer section has become the most frequently visited part of the website. ATHOC has also drawn up a privacy policy, so the personal information of the applicants will be kept confidential.

According to the plan, the recruitment of volunteers has been divided into four steps: 2001 was



The Athens Organizing Committee building
Photos by Cheng Tieliang

Army of Volunteers Gathers in Athens

Greek Style At Work

By Geng Zhensong/Liu Li/Jiang Hao

From 8:30 to 9:30 in the morning, employees gradually arrive at the ATHOC building in succession. During the whole hour a continuous stream of the employees come to work. Catching sight of this, some reporters waiting to visit the Olympic venues frowned. "What time are these people supposed to begin their work?"

Sensing our confusion, the person accompanying us explained. "ATHOC works from 9 am to 5 pm. Most people arrive on time by 9 am. Of course some are late because of traffic. But do

not worry. They can finish their work on time." He also told me he'd been asked the same question before. He jokingly said this was "Greek style". It seems very slow, but the result in the end is satisfactory.

Judging by this scene, you may think the Greeks are very leisurely and carefree. However, once you enter the offices inside the building, the intense working atmosphere will tell you what "Greek style" means. To enter the ATHOC Building, first you go through the Security Check Gate. Several guards watched the X-ray screen closely while others check ID cards

at the entrance. They all appear to be on high alert. Inside the building, each project has a large open office. Each employee is divided by a check-board so they have their own workspace, but this does not prevent them from exchanging ideas with each other. On the wall, huge Olympic picture posters are hung everywhere. An Olympic atmosphere can be felt everywhere. One employee told me the sight of the picture of athletes swimming made him feel very energetic. He said with a smile, "This is the visual stimulant prepared by my boss". The work atmosphere of ATHOC is very intense. With the Olympics drawing nearer and nearer, the employees be-

come increasingly busy.

After this contact with the employees of ATHOC, their unique work style becomes more apparent. For example, before visiting the venues, you may be kept waiting for an hour. But once you start, the whole trip is very tight and orderly. From one stadium to another, someone will appear in time to guide the vehicles and make introductions. In the end, the visit ends one hour ahead of time.

It is said that the Greeks have low work efficiency. But I do not agree. They have their own pace, which may appear slow at first, but it is still very intense and focused. This is the so-called Greek style.



Bai Xiaoying works in the Athens Organizing Committee as a trainee.



Zhang Daibin, another Chinese trainee.

Beijingers in ATHOC

By Geng Zhensong/Liu Li/Jiang Hao

Before we went to Athens, we were told by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) that there were two Chinese trainees working with ATHOC so that in the future they can bring back the benefits of their experience to Beijing. We hoped to interview them in Athens.

As luck would have it, one morning when I was waiting in the hall of the ATHOC Building to visit the Olympic venues, a Chinese girl walked into our view. She appeared equally surprised to see us.

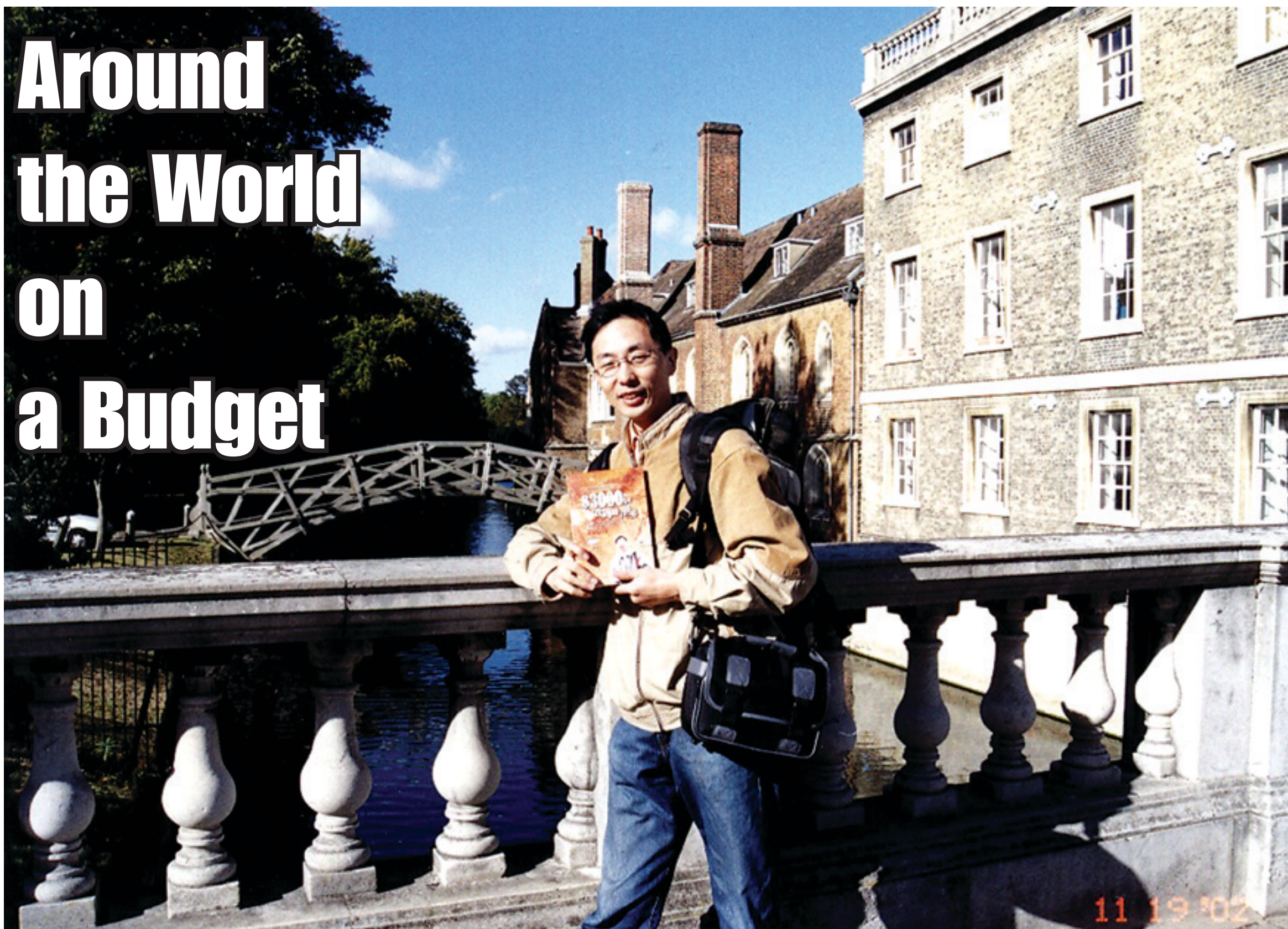
Her name was Bai Xiaoying. Through her introduction, we met another Chinese boy named Zhang Daibin. On July 1, BOCOG sent them to work in ATHOC as trainees. "According to international practice, the organizing committee of the next Olympics sends its staff to work in the organizing committee for the previous Olympics in order to exchange technology and experience," Zhang told me. "In this way, the Olympic Games enable people to communicate with each other not only at the sporting and spiritual levels, but also at the level of international cooperation and technical exchange to ensure tradition and experience can be inherited. At the beginning of this year, the two organizing committees in Beijing and Athens agreed that Beijing would

select people to come and work in Athens. This is how Miss Bai and Mr. Zhang were chosen.

"Here I have a strong sense of international cooperation", said Miss Bai. Although she has worked here only for three months, the team spirit of the group of technicians drawn from all over the world has made a deep impression on her. She and Mr. Zhang work in the department responsible for the construction of the information platform for the Athens Olympics. All the information of the 2004 Olympics will be transmitted through this platform including the real time transmission of the data of all the events. ATHOC adopted an internal bidding plan, so the companies who won the bidding gathered their best employees from their global subsidiary companies. Miss Zhang's colleagues are IT experts from different countries. They work for the same goal and technology is their common language. Many people have become good friends through their work for the games.

Although the 2008 Beijing Olympics are still five years away, some well-known international sponsors have already begun to train Chinese technicians in ATHOC. In addition to Mr. Zhang and Miss Bai who were sent by BOCOG, there are 10 Chinese technicians sent to work in ATHOC by international companies and sponsors.

Around the World on a Budget



Zhu poses with his book in Cambridge, UK

I spent just 11 pounds sterling, the price of a dozen cans of Coca-Cola, to fly from England to the Czech Republic. The secret is to book a ticket in advance.

By Wang Xiaoxiao

Have you ever dreamed of traveling around the world? Of course you have. But have you ever done it? You might say, "I don't have enough money!" But Zhu Zhaorui, an MBA student who had just graduated from Anglia Polytechnic University in the UK, had traveled through 28 countries in 77 days at a cost of just US\$3,305. Okay, that's a lot of money, but when you factor in air fares, it's a reasonably small price for a whistle-stop tour of the world.

Zhu was so happy about his achievement that he wrote a book about it, called, appropriately enough, *I Traveled the World for \$3,000 - a Study in Economic Travel*. It seems publishers are interested. The book has already been printed by the Shantou University Press. "My book is also one of the only Chinese books to be included in the British Library just after being published," Zhu says proudly. "I've been doing a tour of universities giving speeches since October 28, and students seem to be pretty interested in my experience. I'm eager to open their eyes to reaching the rest of the world. I'll be giving a speech at Tsinghua University next year."

Inspired

Zhu used to have an English roommate whose major was European geography. He had traveled a lot and always told Zhu how interesting his adventures had been. In the fall of 2001, an advertisement in a newspaper saying two young people would be sponsored to travel around the world aroused Zhu's enthusiasm. Unfortunately, this chance was only open to UK citizens. "I was so upset that I boasted in front of my foreign friends that we Chinese were also able to travel around the world," Zhu told *Beijing Today*. From then on, he knew he should show he meant what he said. He started to collect all kinds of information on budget travel and finally set off in May 2002.

Economic travel

So did Zhu have to sleep in the open air, eat dry bread and drink nothing but water? Far from it. Zhu said he just paid attention

to getting value for money. "What I call economic travel is maximizing money's value," Zhu explained to *Beijing Today*. "I never washed dishes in order to get extra money or cut costs to save money. I even stayed in five star hotels and had luxurious dinners when I was in France and Italy. The main thing was to get the cheapest air tickets I could find."

Indeed this was where he saved most of his money. Zhu used a round the world ticket offered by the One World Alliance which is formed by eight big airlines around the world. He also used cheap rail passes to travel at the lowest price. "I spent just 11 pounds sterling, the price of a dozen cans of Coca-Cola, to fly from England to Czechoslovakia. The secret is to book a ticket in advance," says Zhu with a smile.

Zhu gained an early insight into budget travel on a flight from England to Ireland. "I had a can of Coca-Cola and was surprised when the stewardess asked me to pay for it. I'd never paid for a drink on a flight before. But when my neighbor told me he'd paid just one pound for his flight ticket, I knew why the drinks were not free. I had paid 69 pounds for my ticket."

Sensible spending

Before Zhu went to study in England, he worked in a big company as the manager of the purchasing department. To Zhu, a buyer's work is not just purchasing goods. "To me, buying is getting the things you need at the lowest possible cost. Combining quality and quantity is also good. It's a kind of ability." Zhu also believes in the importance of collecting information. He thinks the best way to get information is to pay attention to the advertisements in local newspapers. "Wherever I go, I always buy the local newspaper. It's very helpful in getting used to the society you're living in."

I come from China!

"When you are abroad, you should remind yourself all the time that what you do affects what others think about Chinese, not just yourself," Zhu opines. "So I behave myself and show others what Chinese people should be like." As a genuine

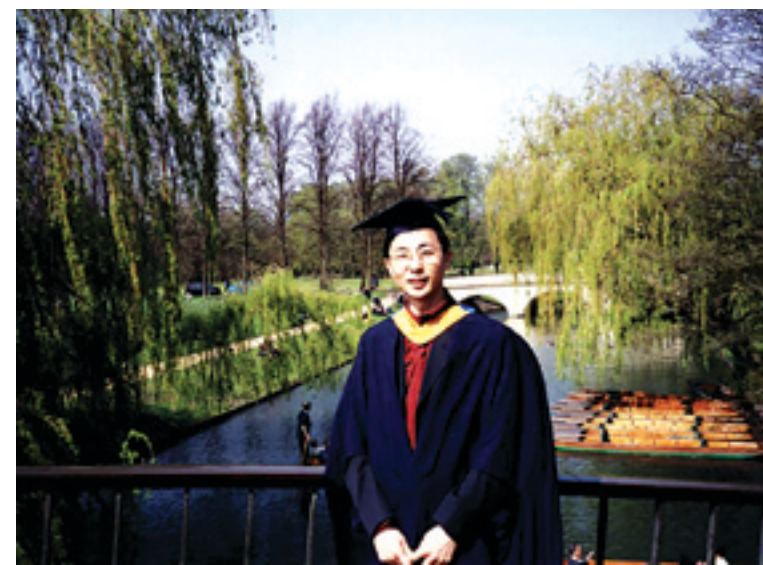
patriot, Zhu was naturally outraged whenever anyone mistook him for a Japanese person. "I'm proud of being Chinese, and it's time to change foreigners' prejudice towards us," he says.

During his travels in Asia, Zhu once bought a bowl of cold noodles in South Korea and felt he didn't get his money's worth for the first time. He wouldn't normally fork out for expensive food, but this occasion was special. He had been looking for the most famous cold noodles in South Korea, and was led to a very expensive hotel. "I looked at the menu and found that even the cheapest noodles would cost me 28,000 won, so I was thinking of how to escape from the restaurant." But at that moment, the waiter came over and said in a friendly voice, "Welcome my Japanese friend, our cold noodles are the best in Korea." "Japanese? Me? I come from China!" Zhu retorted proudly with the anger rising inside him. "Chinese? Sorry sir, I thought you were from Japan, most of our guests are Japanese," said the waiter with a cold voice and a defiant expression. "I thought to myself, can't Chinese eat one bowl of these noodles? I felt a fire burning inside me so I pointed to the most expensive noodles on the menu, costing 36,000 won. With a cold voice, I said 'I'll have that!'"

The world is out there

In England, a lot of the tourists Zhu met were Europeans, Americans or Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan. For Zhu, travel is a lesson that everyone should learn; the ability to deal with unexpected problems is also developed during travel.

Zhu Zhaorui is not the first Chinese traveler to return from abroad, obviously, but he has brought some new concepts back. At the very beginning, even his publishing company doubted whether what he had written was true, and whether such a small amount of money had been sufficient for his travels. But Zhu sticks to his figures. He just wants his readers to go and see the world with an open attitude; it doesn't have to be prohibitively expensive.



Graduation Day



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Celebrating Ba Jin's Centenary

By Wang Fang

November 25 is the 100th birthday of Ba Jin, one of the pillars of modern Chinese literature. A series of special events running through to January are scheduled in Beijing, Shanghai and his hometown, Chengdu, to mark the occasion.

In the early 20th century China, Ba Jin's novels embodied the ideas of democracy, new society and true friendship that were sweeping the country. Today, looking back to the masterpieces of the last century, Ba Jin's works still give rise to a hope for a better life tomorrow.

Political awakening

Born into a feudal, bureaucratic landlord's family in Chengdu in 1904, Li Yaotang, who later adopted the pen name Ba Jin (also known as Pa Chin), was at an early age influenced by the concepts of democracy and anarchism espoused by the New Culture Enlightenment Movement.

Gifted in writing, he published his first work at the age of 16. From 1920 to 1923, he was actively involved in revolutionary activities in Chengdu. He joined the Evenness Society and published poems, such as *Cry from the Abused*, in the "new literature" style.

When he left Chengdu for Shanghai in 1923, his thoughts were probably much the same as those he described of Chueh-hui, the central figure in his novel, *Family*.

"He didn't know whether it was joy or sorrow, but one thing was clear - he was leaving his family."

The move to the modern and cosmopolitan Shanghai marked the beginning of a new phase for Ba Jin. After graduating from Affiliated Middle School of Dong Nan University in 1925, he published a series of essays and translated works promoting anarchism in China.

In 1927, he went to France, where he completed his first novella, *Destruction*. Its publication in the magazine *Novel Monthly* created a storm in China, pushing him to the forefront of the Chinese literary world.

After returning to Shanghai in 1928, he finished his *Love* trilogy, and *Family*, the first part of the *Turbulent Currents* trilogy, cementing his place as one of the greatest Chinese modern literature writers.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Ba Jin was purged. He wrote virtually nothing during the entire period. Since 1978, he has been less prolific than he once was, due to illness and old age. Suffering from Parkinson's disease, Ba Jin wrote at the end of the *Random Thoughts*, in 1984, "I felt it was difficult to write. I could hardly control my pen (indeed I can't move it at all). But my thinking didn't stop. It was waiting for me to write it down. When I sat in front of the desk, I was worried. But I couldn't write a single word and I had to try it again and again. In this way, I finally finished this book."

Events Commemorating Ba Jin's Centenary

In Beijing, the National Museum of Chinese Modern Literature will hold an exhibition featuring painting, sculpture and calligraphy, on the theme of Ba Jin's works and thoughts.

Ba Jin has personally contributed around 250,000 yuan and over 7,000 valuable books to the museum over the past 20 years. He once said, "The establishment of this museum is the final im-

portant thing in my life."

In Chengdu, an international seminar on Ba Jin's work will be held on November 17.

In Shanghai, a dramatic adaptation of *Family*, starring a who's who of top Chinese actors, is staged this week. A symposium on Ba Jin's work and a photo exhibition is planned.



Portrait of Ba Jin by Ding Cong

Comment on Ba Jin

"Ba Jin is one of the greatest writers. He is the writer and creator of everlasting works.... His thoughts on freedom and openness make him a living witness to this century."

Francois Mitterrand

"He is a passionate writer with revolutionary thoughts, one of the few good writers you can count on your fingers."

Lu Xun

"It is not necessary for me to describe the characteristics of Ba Jin. He is one of the few writers with a clear conscience. His stance is always against the violence and

for justice. He will never associate with evil people. He devotes himself to writing, translating, and publishing. In every sense, he is a pioneering contributor to our culture."

Guo Moruo

"He comes, and sits over there. He is the authority even though he does not speak."

Tsutomu Mizukami

"He loves humans, our country and people. He does not write only to become a writer; he fights for the happiness of people all through his life."

Bing Xin

About Family

This novel is the first of a trilogy of novels completed by Ba Jin in 1931 under the title *Turbulent Currents*. Drawn largely from his own experience, *Family* is the story of four generations of the Kao family and its servants. It is essentially a picture of the conflict between old China and the new tide rising to destroy it. This theme is manifested in the daily lives of the Kao family, in particular, among three young Kao brothers who must choose between compromise and rebellion. It reflects not only the social unrest in China of that period, but also the varied psychological responses to a time of social transition.

Editorial Reviews of Family

"Pa Chin's *Family*, one of the most celebrated novels of the May 4th Movement, continues to be indispensable reading. Its clash of the traditional and the modern, of age and youth, of Confucianism and individualism remains relevant to any understanding of how China struggled, and continues to struggle, to escape the constraints of stifling orthodox." William N. Rogers II.

Extract from Family

A new emotion gradually possessed Chueh-hui. He didn't know whether it was joy or sorrow, but one thing was clear-he was leaving his family. Before him was an endless stretch of water sweeping steadily forward, bearing him to an unfamiliar city. There, all that was new was developing-new activities, new people, new friends.

This river, this blessed river, was taking him away from the home he had lived in for eighteen years to a city and people he had never seen. The prospect dazzled him; he had no time to regret the life he had cast behind. For the last time, he looked back. "Goodbye," Chueh-hui said softly. He turned to watch the on-rushing river, the green water that never for an instant halted its rapidly advancing flow.

(translated by Sidney Shapiro)

Works available in English:

Living amongst Heroes, Beijing Foreign Languages Press, 1954

A Battle for Life, Beijing Foreign Language Press, 1959

Cold Nights (translated Nathan K. Mao and Liu Tsun-yan). Hong Kong: Chinese University Press; Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1978

Family (translated Sidney Shapiro), Beijing Foreign Languages Press. 1958; Hong Kong: C&W Publishing Co., 1979

Autumn in Spring and Other Stories (translated Gladys Yang), Chinese Literature Press, 1981

Random Thoughts (translated Geremie Barmé), Hong Kong Joint Publishing Company, 1984

Selected Works of Ba Jin (translated Sidney Shapiro and Wang Mingjie), Beijing Foreign Languages Press, 1988.

Chronology:

- 1904 Born in Chengdu, Sichuan
- 1912 Republic of China established
- 1919 May 4th movement
- 1923 Leaves Chengdu for Shanghai
- 1927-28 Lives in France.
- 1929 Publishes novel *Mie Wang (Destruction)*
- 1931 publishes *Wu (Fog)*, first part of the *Aiqing Sunbuqu (Love Trilogy)*
- 1933 publishes *Jia (Family)*, first part of the *Jiliu Sanbuqu (Turbulent Currents Trilogy)*; Publishes *Yu (Rain)*, second part of *Love Trilogy*
- 1935 Publishes *Dian (Lightening)* third part of *Love Trilogy*
- 1938 Publishes *Chun (Spring)*, second part of *Turbulent Currents Trilogy*
- 1940 Publishes *Qiu (Autumn)* third part of *Turbulent Currents Trilogy*
- 1944 Marries Chen Yunzhen in Guiyang, Guizhou
- 1949 People's Republic of China founded
- 1953 Elected vice-chairman of China Writers' Association
- 1962 Collected works published in fourteen volumes
- 1966 Purged during the Cultural Revolution
- 1975 Nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature
- 1977 Begins writing again
- 1978 Elected standing member of the Fifth National People's Congress
- 1981 Elected chairman of the Chinese Writers Association
- 1986 Made honorary president of China Literature Foundation
- 2000 Nominated for the 2001 Nobel Literature Prize



Ba Jin received a Honorary Doctor of Literature degree from Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1984.

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By Iris Miao

Randomize-IZE Beijing, following the successful debut of the Random-IZE film and video festival run in June 2002 at London's Sovi Art Center, kicked off quietly at the 798 Art District last Saturday afternoon, with six pairs of TVs and DVD players scattered around the roomy Bauhaus space. The local show is the third stop of its international tour, after hitting Taipei in May and Malmo, Sweden in August.

Random-IZE Beijing continues the core of the London show, with over 80 video works by 60 artists from 16 countries and regions, and also includes works from eight Beijing artists, bringing the number of exhibited works up to nearly 100 with a total of over 10 hours of programming.

"We are trying to construct a pluralist platform, which now includes short films, documentaries, recorded performances, art videos and animations, and covers a variety of subjects such as the body, landscapes, political issues, abstract imagery and personal reminiscences," says Sun Ning, co-curator of the London Random-IZE Film and Video Festival, and curator of Random-IZE Beijing.

The Chinese title of Random-IZE Beijing translates directly to "multi-visual-elements." "What I personally like most about the show is its diversity and its accessibility. The artists come from different cultural backgrounds but all have done deep exploration. There are no good or bad works, according to my standard. Any work that the audience accepts is a good piece of art," Sun told *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

Among the 70 participating artists are such names as famed composer Michael Nyman, who presents a four-minute anti-war documentary he produced with film director Peter Greenaway back in 1967. *Love, Love, Love* records an anti-war protest in Hyde Park, London, dubbed to the song of the same name by the Beatles. Also on hand are winners of the 2002 Beck's Futures Prize for Film and Video Anja Kirschner of Germany, Hideaki Sawwayanagi of Japan and Yung-Hsien Chen of Taiwan Province.

Chen's award-winning work, *Release*, begins with a human head being wrapped with layers of bacon and pieces of salmon held in place with rubber bands. Scissors then noisily slice through the bands and the layers start to fall off, gradually revealing the face of the artist as he struggles to breathe before

Cutting-edge Video Show Hits 798 Arts Center



fading out.

In her award-winning work *Hotel*, Anja Kirschner uses a minimalist strategy to explore the space of hotel at an extremely slow pace. A mirror on the wall reflects the scene in front, confusing the audience's sense of what is real and what is not.

She is a part of the strong female presence in the exhibition, as the many participating women artists show an amazing range of talent in working with the relatively new medium of visual art.

Many subjects, coming out of

sensations from these artists' daily lives, may seem somewhat superficial, such as a fruitless love affair starting in a bar in *Brief Moments of Concern 1* by British artist Lisa Nash, the tangled love affair emerging at a launderette in *The Launderette* by Italian artist Stefania Marangoni, or in *The Wardrobe* by German's Nezaket Ekici. In eight minutes, the artist puts on heaps of clothing in a square in front of a church to illustrate the simple yet profound concept that too many clothes are a burden. Despite such plain and direct subject

matters, real tenderness and delicacy enable these female artists to touch the hearts of audiences.

At the opening, the show seemed a bit rough, as Sun Ning revealed that all the screens and backing machines were not installed until just one hour before doors opened at 3 pm. The TVs and DVD players were simply set on the cement floor and their remote controls hard to find, forcing many viewers to watch some of works on mute. Yet regardless of such first day jitters, audience feedback was generally warm.



(Left) Don Bury Presents Top Gun by Don Bury

(Above) Love, Love, Love

by Michael Nyman

(Below) Hotel by Anja Kirschner



up for demolition and suggests they break their boredom by "smashing some windows." The roughly 10 minute digital video work was filmed with an intentional jerky hand to demonstrate the unstable mental states of many modern youth.

That mainstream Chinese audiences have yet to understand such experimental work was shown when a cleaning lady at the Old Factory Book Bar asked Sun Ning whether one machine had gone haywire because it just showed the same thing for 10 minutes. That kind of repetition is in fact the whole point of *Thrash 001* by Canadian artist Francis Summers. In the work, the action of opening and shutting windows is repeated over and over again, and in the process a mundane task is transformed into art.

Repetition also adds power to the 54-second short *The Span* by female artist Hsin-Yi Ku of Taiwan. For the duration of the film, Ku keeps shaking her head, denying and refusing everything in the world including herself until she passes out.

Curator Zhao Shulin, who has been a devotee of visual art for two years, expressed excitement and satisfaction with the high quality of works on display in this local show. At the same time, he frankly pointed out the shortcomings of the participating Chinese video artists and the general status of the domestic art: "Many of the works appear to be superficial and lack originality. Some are 100 percent copies."

Yet he acknowledged that such weaknesses are not vital and are understandable, as, "after all, video art in China is still in its infancy." He added that disputes between how to exactly define visual art, documentary and independent film as separate fields are factors preventing the wider acceptance of the art form in this country. "I like to use the word multi-media art, instead of visual art, to define what we have in this show," Zhao concluded.

Where: Old Factory Book Bar, 798 Space, No.4 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang

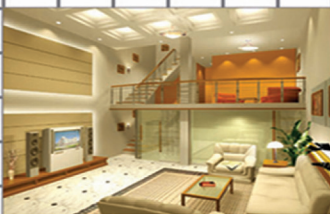
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Chinese director Huo Jian-qi's film *Nuan* has won best film award at the 16th Tokyo International Film Festival, which ended its nine-day run Sunday.

The film, adapted from author Mo Yan's short story about the pangs of first love and irony of fate, stars Japanese actor Teruyuki Kagawa, Li Jia and Guo Xiaodong. Kagawa won the award for best actor in a ceremony capping the nine-day film festival.

Established in 1985, the Tokyo International Film Festival showcased many films from abroad and hosted a number of Hollywood celebrities. The film festival, held annually since 1991, took place mainly at the Bunkamura arts center in Tokyo's Shibuya entertainment district.

Chinese Director Wins Top Prize at Tokyo Film Festival

Nuan was selected from among 15 final entries for the Tokyo Grand Prix, festival organizers said.

The best actress award was shared by Japan's Shinobu Terajima for her role in *Vibrator* and American Kristy Jean Hulslander for her performance in *Santa Smokes*.

Chinese actor Gong Li, who was president of the competition jury, presented the best film award to Huo Jianqi.



Li Jia



Guo Xiaodong



Neo (Keanu Reeves) prepares to do battle with Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving) in the final (or is it?) instalment of the Matrix.

Matrix III Premieres in China

Tens of thousands of moviegoers in China watched the premier of *The Matrix: Revolutions* Wednesday night, along with Matrix fans all over the world.

It is the first time that a ma-

ior Hollywood blockbuster has premiered on the Chinese mainland at the same time as in western countries. In Beijing, the movie made its debut at 12 cinemas at 10:00 pm. Tickets

were cost 80 yuan.

Li Lei, an audience member, said, "I have been a Matrix addict since the beginning. Maybe the ticket is a little more expensive, but we need not wait for a

long time, it is worth it."

The premiere was screened in English with Chinese subtitles. Those who want to see it dubbed into Chinese will have to wait till next week.



New Release from Yang Kun

Yang Kun

Yang Kun, who shot to fame with the song *Whatever* last year, released his second album *That Day* on Monday. A 15 minute music video was released simultaneously.

Yang Kun wrote nine of the ten songs on the album.

Speaking at a press conference Monday, Yang said "On my first album *Whatever*, I was only a singer. Now I want to be both singer and creator." The new album features producers from the mainland, Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

(Guo Yuandan)

A Pop Star Changes Name and Look

Pop singer Mei Jia's first album, *Love is Chocolate*, went on sale last Friday. As one might guess from the title, the album is sweet to the point of being sickly.

To mark the special occasion, Mei Jia plans to change not only her name, but also her hairstyle, reportedly both at the request of her record company, who feared that Mei Jia might be misunderstood to mean Meijia (imperfect).

The reason for the hairstyle change was given to be that she worn her hair long for two years, and that was quite long enough!



Mei Jia

WORLDWIDE

Actor Christian Slater's Wife Hit Him-Vegas Police

Actor Christian Slater received 20 stitches to the back of his head after his wife allegedly hurled a drinking glass at him during an argument in their Las Vegas hotel room, police said on Tuesday.

Slater's wife, Ryan Haddon, was arrested on a misdemeanor charge of domestic battery after Monday's incident at the Hard Rock Hotel but the film star declined to press charges, according to Carla Alston, a spokeswoman for the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

She added aid that with Slater declining to press charges, it would be up to prosecutors to decide whether to pursue a case against Haddon. Haddon, who left the scene immediately after the altercation, returned to the hotel after her husband went to the hospital. She was then taken into custody, booked at the Clark County Detention Center and later released, Alston said.



Christian Slater and his wife, Ryan Haddon.

Zeta-Jones May Sue Over Atkins Diet Stories

Lawyers for Oscar-winning actress Catherine Zeta-Jones say she may be beautiful, but she didn't get that way from the Atkins diet, thank you very much,



Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones

and she won't have anyone suggesting that she did.

Lawyers for Zeta-Jones have sent a letter to news organizations saying that she has been wrongly linked in some reports to the diet that, according to the letter, "has been derided by nutritionists and other health care officials for decades."

The attorneys say they are currently investigating the stories "and we intend to pursue claims on her behalf against each and every publication responsible for the creation and initial growth of these false and damaging stories."



Family and friends salute Johnny Cash.

Family and Friends Salute Johnny Cash in Nashville

It was an evening of standing ovations Monday as performers from the worlds of country and rock gathered at the Ryman Auditorium to pay tribute to the late Johnny Cash. The concert will be broadcast Saturday on Country Music Television.

The evening featured heartfelt renditions of Cash songs performed by friends and family of the entertainer, who died in September, aged 71.

Gracing the stage were family including daughters Rosanne and Laura, and son John, as well as such luminaries as Kris Kristofferson, Hank Williams, Jr., Brooks and Dunn, Willie Nelson, Travis Tritt, John Mellencamp, Sheryl Crow, Larry Gatlin, George Jones, Marty Stuart and Rodney Crowell. Actor Tim Robbins was master of ceremonies.

There were obvious pairings, such as Kid Rock and Hank Williams, Jr. on *There Ain't No Good Chain Gang*, Tritt and Stuart on *I Walk the Line* and Nelson and Crow singing *If I Were a Carpenter*.

Reuters

Edited by Guo Yuandan

北京青年报
BEIJING TODAY
今日北京

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By Hou Mingxin

British star sprinter Dwain Chambers faces a minimum two-year ban that would rule him out of next summer's Olympics in Athens after confirmation last Friday that he tested positive for the banned substance tetrahydrogestrinone, or THG, a specially formed anabolic steroid.

Chambers failed an out-of-competition drug test for THG at a training camp in California on August 1, when his A sample tested positive for THG.

Last Friday came the confirmation from the UK Athletics Association that his B sample had also tested positive at a Los Angeles laboratory.

The International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) immediately suspended the British sprinter and hold a disciplinary hearing.

Under British Olympic Association rules, Chambers would also automatically receive a life ban from future Olympic Games if he fails to prove his innocence at his hearing.

More troubling is that Chambers' case is just a drop in the THG bucket, as over 100 prominent international athletes are suspected of abuse of the steroid.

THG suspects list growing

In mid-October, the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) unraveled what it called "the largest drug bust ever". Dozens of THG positives were found in the retesting of 350 samples from the US Track and Field Championships in June and 100 later out-of-competition tests.

According to USADA Chief Executive Terry Madden, the discoveries constitute the largest ever drug bust in the anabolic steroid area in terms of the number of athletes and athletic organizations involved. However, Madden did not reveal exactly how many athletes had tested positive for THG.

He called the case "a conspiracy involving chemists, coaches and certain athletes using what they developed to be undetectable designer steroids to defraud their fellow competitors and the American and world public who pay to attend sports events." No names are likely to be released until December as the positive tests wind their way through US anti-doping procedures, Madden said.

In an open letter on October 22 to the leaders of the National Football League, Major League Baseball, National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League and the PGA Tour, among others, Craig Masback, CEO of USA Track and Field, the national governing body for the sport, asserted, "Performance-enhancing drugs are now being used by athletes in every professional sport."

According to a report published on October 25 in theage.com.au, the website of the Australian newspaper, before the end of this year, at least 40 and perhaps as many as 100 of America's leading athletes will be asked about their association with Conte, named by the USADA as the source for THG, a steroid undetectable by the normal range of drug tests until just over a week ago.

The athletes will be asked, before a grand jury now sitting in a federal court in San Francisco, about their association with Conte's company Balco, from which federal and local agents in September removed vials and containers labeled as human growth hormone, anabolic steroids and testosterone.

Among those answering questions will be some of the biggest names in American sport, such as Barry Bonds, regarded as one of the greatest players in Major League Baseball history, Jason Giambi of the New York Yankees, and sprinter Kelli White, winner of the 100 and 200 meter events at the world championships in Paris in August.

White and another American, hurdler Chris Phillips, tested positive for the same stimulant at the world championships and White may lose her gold medals as a result.

So far, American shot-putter Kevin Toth, world indoor 1,500 meters champion Regina Jacobs and John McEwen, a two-time US indoor champion in the 35-pound weight hammer throw, have also tested positive to THG.

What is THG?

The THG scandal was uncovered through the anonymous tes-

Sports World Shocked by Doping Scandal



Small photos by google.com

timony of an unknown individual, who also provided a syringe containing a few drops of the liquid.

The individual described himself as "a high profile coach" to the USADA. He sent the syringe to the authority's headquarters in Colorado Springs in June. It was sent on to the UCLA dope-testing lab in Los Angeles, where researchers found the THG, a previously unknown anabolic steroid.

Athletes use such compounds to build muscle because they increase the levels of enzymes the body can use to produce protein tissue. They also allow the body to produce short-term energy when oxygen is short, meaning that athletes can train longer and harder than usual.

THG proved tricky to trace, as chemical fragments of the drug are present in the urine of the athletes who take it, in the past scientists administering tests simply did not realize that they came from a banned substance.

In other laboratories around the world, frozen samples are now being exhumed for retesting. Like the



The fallout of British sprinter Dwain Chambers' (main photo) testing positive for THG has been particularly severe in the US, with such major American sports stars as (top to bottom, left) Regina Jacobs, Kelli White, Jason Giambi, Kevin Toth and Barry Bonds now under suspicion of abusing the steroid.

Photo by Photocom

rings on a newly felled tree, those samples may eventually tell the story of the origins and effects of THG.

World declares war on doping

In reaction to the spreading scandal, international and national sports governing bodies have expressed their resolve to fight the use of THG and other drugs in sport.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) called for "retrospective testing" in an statement it sent to all international sports federations, in which it encouraged them to begin rigorous testing for THG.

The IAAF, the world athletics governing body, has already decided to retest all 405 urine sample from the Paris track and field world championships, while global swimming governing body FINA has indicated it might order samples taken at the World Swimming Championships in Barcelona to be tested for THG, according to an October 25 report in the Singapore-based *Strait Times*.

That article also reported that the International Rugby Board and the International Ski Federation have also confirmed that they would test for THG.

For a long time, the US has been accustomed to blaming other nations whose athletes test positive but refusing to acknowledge when its own athletes use illegal substances, as the US Olympic Committee (USOC) refused to do in the 1980s and 1990s and as USA Track and Field refused to do in the case of Jerome Young, the 400-meter runner who was allowed to compete and win a relay gold medal in the 2000 Summer Olympics.

But this time things are different. *The International Herald Tribune* reported on October 24 that the United States Olympic Com-

mittee had issued an ultimatum to the country's track and field federations, demanding they closely scrutinize their athletes.

That call was supported by the USADA's creation of a test for the previously undetectable THG.

On October 23, USA Track and Field responded to the ultimatum by announcing it plans to implement a "zero tolerance" program that could result in lifetime bans for first-time steroid offenses and fines of up to \$100,000 for athletes or coaches.

Despite urgings from the WADA, the UK Athletics Association announced that it would not immediately move to retest stored samples for THG. According to a report in *The Guardian* on October 25, negative samples are normally only stored for around one month in the UK, meaning that the initiation of retrospective testing would require the overhaul of sample storage policy.

In contrast to the situation in Britain, across Europe the demand for retrospective testing is putting a serious strain on many accredited laboratories.

Testing for THG will be carried out at next year's Athens Olympics, IOC Coordination Commission head Denis Oswald confirmed October 25.

"THG will be tested using a new technique," Oswald said at a press conference in Athens after a three-day tour of venues for the 2004 Olympics.

"The gap between cheaters and science is getting very narrow... We will make every, every effort to test athletes and to ensure that the cheats do not take part in the Games. We are confident the Games will be clean," Oswald added.

No Athens for US Baseballers

By Wesley Lei

The members of the defending champion US baseball team will be watching the 2004 Olympics from the comfort of their homes. Last Friday, manager Frank Robinson and his team of mostly minor leaguers were beaten at their own game, falling to Mexico 2-1 in Panama City and making an unexpected departure from the qualifying rounds for the Games.

"I can't believe it!" legendary baseball manager Tommy Lasorda, who coached the US team to gold at Sydney in 2000, told ESPN that day. "It's a shock and a disgrace that the Americans won't be represented in the Olympics."

The US team was unbeaten going into its quarterfinal match-up against previously winless Mexico in the Americas qualifying event.

Unlike basketball, the biggest stars of the US professional league do not play Olympic baseball, and despite the surprising loss, are unlikely to do so four years from now when qualifying begins for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Baseball entered the Olympics as a demonstration event in 1984 and became a medal sport in 1996, when Cuba won the gold medal in Atlanta.

Domestic Skaters Victorious at Local Event

By Wesley Lei

The Cup of China international figure skating competition, an event in the International Skating Union (ISU) Grand Prix series, finished Sunday in Beijing.

Reigning world champions Shen Xue and Zhao Hongbo overcame compatriots Pang Qing and Tong Jian to capture their first ISU Grand Prix pairs title of the season last Friday.

Two-time world champions Shen and Zhao gave a confident and precise performance of a balletic routine to *The Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky. The win gave them 12 points, bringing their total for the year up to 21, which should be enough to proceed to the Grand Prix finals in December.

Timothy Goebel of the US claimed the gold medal in the men's singles event, while Ukrainian Elena Liashenko won the women's singles competition. In ice dancing, Tatiana Navka and Roman Kostomarov of Russia topped the standings.

China Leading Women's Volleyball World Cup

By Wesley Lei

China extended their winning streak to eight straight matches at the 2003 Women's Volleyball World Cup as they crushed Egypt 3-0 on Monday in Osaka, Japan.

The Chinese women, who are after their first World Cup title in 18 years, stand alone at the top of the 12-team, round-robin tournament with three matches remaining.

World champions Italy, Brazil and the US stayed close with China after their victories on Monday. The three teams share 7-1 win-loss records, but Italy ranks second ahead of Brazil and the US with a better sets ratio.

"I sent all my players to the court today to make sure everyone is ready for the next round," said Chinese head coach Chen Zhonghe after the match. China will face the US, Italy and Japan in the last stage of the competition.

The top three finishers in the tournament will qualify for the Athens Olympics in 2004.



China beat Egypt 3-0 for their eighth straight victory at the 2003 Women's World Cup on Monday in Japan.

Xinhua Photo

Dominican Republic Volleyball Player Tests Positive

The Federal International de Volleyball (FIVB) announced on Sunday in Toyama, Japan that for the first time in volleyball history, a player had tested positive for an illegal substance, in this case the anabolic steroid methandienone.

The FIVB has decided to suspend the player, Nurys Arias Done of the Dominican Republic, for two years effective immediately, according to a press release issued by the organization.

Her test was conducted after Dominican Republic's 3-0 loss to China in a Women's World Cup match held in Japan last Monday. She was drawn for doping control after her team's match against Brazil last Wednesday, when she tested positive for the same substance.

Arias, 25, admitted to having taken some vitamins and pills to improve her appetite. She and the Dominican Republic delegation have recognized the validity of the first result and decided not to request an analysis of the second sample.

The Dominican Republic National Volleyball Federation announced on Sunday that the athlete admitted taking the medication Gelnorex Vita, without knowing that it contained a banned substance.

That federation also stated that neither its directors nor members of the medical department had any notion Arias was taking the medication, which is readily available in drugstores back in her native country and can be purchased over the counter without medical prescription as a multi-vitamin complex to enhance the appetites of adults and children. (Xinhua)

By Joel Kirkhart

The long-awaited Lotus Lane, open now for just over a month, is the clearest front of the changes sweeping the Shishahai area. This strip of restaurants, bars and the occasional shop and teahouse has a distinctly bourgeois air and is backed by the power of some serious marketing, dispelling the quieter, more bohemian origins of the lake as prime hang-out spot.

One look at the new establishments' glassy facades is enough to know they are not trying to draw the starving artists crowd. While it is too early to say exactly who the intended audience is, tourists are clearly a significant target, if only because most of the bars fail to offer anything that cannot be found cheaper and better at other, less conspicuous places in town.

That is not to say that Lotus Lane has nothing going for it. The many outside tables will make ideal places for lakeside dining and drinking in warmer weather, and all of the two- and three-story establishments offer expansive interior views north towards Yindingqiao. Delving a little deeper, the strip seems a better place to eat than to drink, unless you're after a pleasant afternoon coffee. While most of the bars tend to the pricey and cheesy end of the spectrum, the three full-on restaurants are all

Testing the Waters at Lotus Lane

Highly-hyped lakeside area home to fine restaurants, weaker bars

impressive and two truly triumph.

The most popular place to eat on the strip so far is the city's second **South Silk Road (Chama Gudao)** restaurant. The Yunnan theme of the original has been upheld, but the menu has been changed to emphasize smallish dishes cooked up fresh on flat metal grills. Think of it as Yunnan teppanyaki.

There are many beef selections, including the excellent *feiniu chuan*, or beef rolls (28 yuan), made of thin slices of beef, wrapped around tasty cubes of vegetables and then cooked on the grill. Another must order is the *daishi jinla luofeiyu* (Dai-style spicy fish, 38 yuan), a whole fish sliced in half, lightly fried up on the grill and served covered with a heavenly mash of chili peppers, ginger, cilantro and other good stuff. Also definitely worth a try are the *laojia lameizi* (native hot meat, 20 yuan) little balls of rice wrapped around pickled peppers and fried to a crisp, like a southern Chinese jalapeno popper.



Wall of booze at Lotus Blue

Among the carry-overs from the original South Silk Road's menu are some of the fun or upsetting insect offerings, like the tasty, crisp fried bees served with honey for dipping in a combination that cannot be kosher.



Thai beef and pork sates

One meal at Hunan-style restaurant and teahouse **Yuelu Shanwu** is enough to know it is a winner – four dishes ordered and all were delicious. There are a few tables on the ground floor, but most of the eating takes place upstairs, near the windows



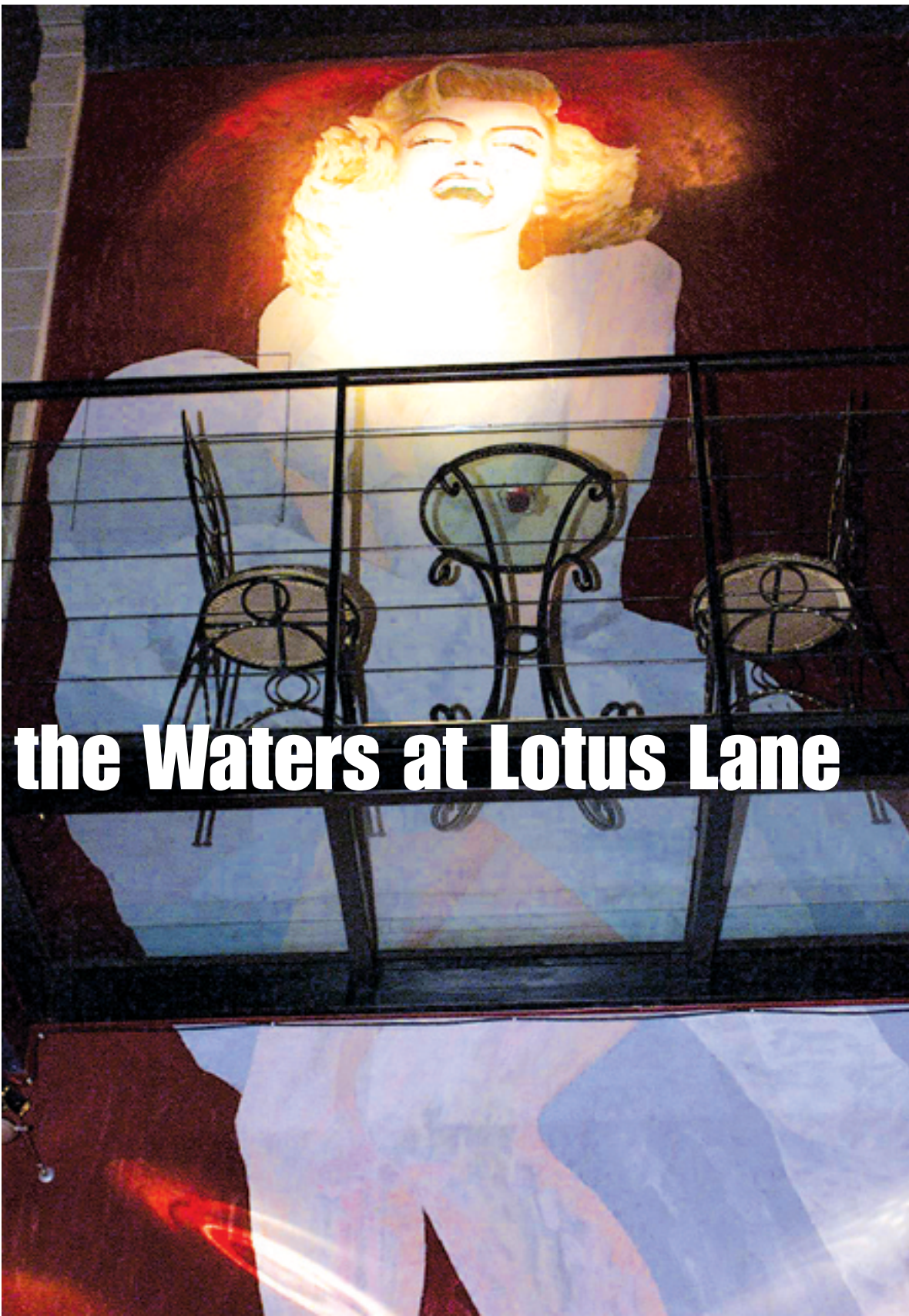
Relaxing at Kosmo

or in glass-enclosed private rooms.

The Nanxian dry sliced meat with chili oil (*nanxian malarou*, 22 yuan) is a savory and spicy way to start a meal. Baked fish



South Silk Road



A huge mural of Marilyn dominates Sex and the City

Photos by Lou Ge

with spicy bean sauce (*doula zheng louyang huopeiyu*, 28 yuan) has lots of tricky little bones, but is worth the effort, as the fish is crisp and its sauce piquant and delicious.

Wind-dried radish with tujia salted meat (*fengchui luobo chao tujia larou*, 26 yuan) is an impressive version of a Hunan standard, with unusually crunchy, not chewy, radish and plenty of smoky, salty *larou*.

A separate menu offers a range of dry-pot items, including the spicy, tender and delectable dry-pot potatoes (*ganguo tudou pian*, 18 yuan). A few variations of hot pots are also available starting at around 80 yuan each.

The young waitstaff is attentive and helpful and the décor is pleasantly subdued. Overall, this bar-restaurant-teahouse hybrid has all the things needed to pass an entirely pleasant whole day by the lakeside.

Honorable mention must also go to **Lotus Blue**. The establishment's first floor is home to a huge bar and a few simple tables bathed in pleasant, red light, while the second floor is comfier, with couches and views.

The culinary theme is "fusion" Thai, meaning Thai food milded down to accommodate local palates, though not completely inauthentic as the chef is from Chang Mai.

For starters, the green papaya salad (38 yuan) is a solid, if pricey, version of a Southeast Asian classic, and the spicy seafood and minced pork salad (30 yuan) has a delicious dressing and good value.

Thai standards, such as the rich and tasty tom yum kung seafood soup (45 yuan) and green curry chicken (30 yuan) are delicious, but clearly scaled down in terms of heat. A surprisingly outstanding dish is one of the simplest, Thai-style stir-fried Chinese broccoli (25 yuan), in which the *jielan* is cooked fast to keep it crisp and well matched by a simple, thin sauce.

The drinks menu offers standard cocktails for around 30 yuan each and some well-done juice mixes, such as the tropical "Band of Four" priced around 35 yuan for a sizeable glass.

Arguably the most worthy bar on the lane is Buffalo Stone. The ground floor has glass walls that can be opened in more temperate weather, while the lush plants on the second floor create a tropical vibe. Drink prices are on the high end, around 45 yuan for cocktails, but the pleasant décor, comfortable couches and intimate window-side tables make this the strongest option for bending an elbow on the strip.

The north end of the row is home to the schmaltzy bar Sex and the City. The second floor has some choice chaise lounges laid alongside the windows, but it goes down-

hill from there, starting with the huge and scary portrait of Marilyn Monroe.

Average cocktails go for 40 yuan each and the house specials fetch 45 yuan a piece. Measures are fine but the mixing is disappointing, especially at these prices.



Buffalo Stone

Overall, Sex and the City is an idea that may be good, but just isn't there yet.

Things get more generic with neighbors **Double Bay and Water of Life**. From the street, Double Bay looks like a Sanlitun north street transplant, with Andy Lau vid-



Water of Life

eos on in the corner, aggressive door guys and weird light. There is a huge downstairs area, but who wants to go underground, mural or no mural, when the whole point of Lotus Lane is the view? Water of Life also has a massive below-ground room for live



Hand-torn turtle (shousi xiaobie, 28 yuan) at Yuelu Shanwu

music shows, while its upper two floors are fine but pretty generic, as is the selection of drinks and Western food on the menu.

Coffee drinkers are better off. The southern end of the strip is home to **Kosmo Living**, which, as *Beijing Today* reported on September 26, serves some righteous espresso as well as a range of healthy, tasty foods, including probably Beijing's first real California-style wraps, which go for 28 yuan each. The city's umpteenth **Starbucks** stands nearby, right at the head of the lane, its familiar sign shining onto Ping'an Avenue.

Talking Turkey

By Joel Kirkhart

Thursday week is arguably the best American holiday, or at the least the most gluttonous, a day for no-holds-barred, stuff-your-face-until-your-buttons-pop eating – ah, the joys of Thanksgiving.

Here in Beijing, we have much to give thanks for, but an abundance of turkeys or places in which to cook them are not on my list. Anyone who does not live in housing with a full-size oven, like yours truly, and wants to host a Thanksgiving feast must deal with the reality that roasting a bird at home may be all but impossible.

Fortunately, there are plenty of perfectly acceptable, if not completely orthodox, options, and they do not include tucking tail and heading to a hotel buffet (normally disappointing in my experience).

First off, cooks with their minds set on turkey can pick up a few of those Hormel turkey legs sold at most large supermarkets and heat them up. Good whole-bird options are the rotisserie chickens roasted up all over the place, but be wary of the Southeast-Asian-style birds – their flavor can make a rough contrast to important Thanksgiving sides. The ultimate turkey alternative is to purchase a sufficient number of Beijing roast ducks and all the trimmings. Not only are guests sure to love it, but rolls of duck, spring onion, stuffing and cranberry sauce run rings around normal turkey leftovers.

The makings for most other Thanksgiving staples, such as stuffing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes and apple pie are readily available. Many of these holiday staples also call for cooking in an oven, but the little electric ones sold in most home appliance places can do the job just fine. Creative cooks will also find there are many ways to cheat and take some of the work out of making a full Thanksgiving spread.

Freshly roasted chestnuts or corn cakes sold in supermarkets are cheap and convenient ingredients to easily make stuffing extra special. And with such delicious, already-roasted sweet potatoes for sale for a song on most busy streets, why make your own? Just buy a few, scoop out the flesh, add some butter, sugar and a little spice, mash it all up a bit and *voila* – a Thanksgiving favorite in five minutes.



Pass By Bar – a Siheyuan Experience

By Bruce Connolly

The popular Pass By bar is not a place to do as the name instructs. The owners are a traveling couple that wanted to create a place where travelers passing through Beijing could relax together in a pleasant atmosphere, and they have succeeded and then some.

Their original, cozy, one-room bar was so successful that it relocated last year and has subsequently more than quadrupled in size. Located in a thriving hutong near Shishahai, the traditional structure has large picture windows allowing views of everyday life, and its garden-like courtyard and classy interior are so simply beautiful that they are frequently used for photo sessions.

The former home is divided into several brightly colored rooms, including a non-smoking area with photographs of Tibet on the walls and another that sports an original hutong well. The main room is home to the Pass By's extensive library and a notice board on which travelers can post messages and events are advertised.

The bar draws a mixed crowd of hipsters, drama students and backpackers, and its menu offers something for everyone with a fusion of East and West. Starters include tasty bruschetta, minestrone soup (25 yuan) or lighter salads such as the *melanzane griglia te con ricotta* (grilled eggplant, ricotta cheese and walnuts on lettuce with a balsamic dressing, 45 yuan). The entrée selections range from inexpensive plates of *nasi goreng* rice or Indian chicken curry, around 35 yuan each, to homemade pasta and premium items such as angus sirloin steak with black pepper sauce (88 yuan) and grilled salmon in herb butter sauce (78 yuan). A long-time draw of the bar is its delicious and cheesy pizzas, including the fun "hutong pizza" topped with *chuan-like* chunks of spiced roast mutton.

There are many coffee options for washing down a meal or just passing the afternoon, with freshly-brewed joe available in many varieties and flavors. The bar also offers a range of beer, wine, spirits and cocktails.

Where: 108 Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng
Open: 12 pm – 2 am **Tel:** 8403 8004



Photo by Bruce Connolly

The Lotus Lane lineup:

Starbucks Coffee

Where: No. 1, Lotus Lane, Shishahai
Qianhai Xiyan, Dongcheng
Open: 10 am – 12 am
Tel: 6616 1489

Kosmo Living

Where: No. 5
Open: 10 am – 2 am
Tel: 6611 0214

Buffalo Stone

Where: No. 6
Open: 10 am – 2 am
Tel: 6617 2146

Double Bay

Where: No. 7
Open: 9:30 am – 3 am
Tel: 6617 1257

Water of Life

Where: No. 8
Open: 10 am – 2 am
Tel: 6617 1381

Yuelu Shanwu

Where: No. 10
Open: 11 am – 12 am
Tel: 6617 2696
Average cost: 50 yuan per person

South Silk Road

Where: No. 12
Open: 11 am – 12 am
Tel: 6615 5515
Average cost: 60 yuan per person

Lotus Blue

Where: No. 14
Open: 1 pm – 12 am
Tel: 6617 2714
Average cost: 80 yuan per person

Sex and the City

Where: No. 15
Open: 4 pm – 2 am
Tel: 6612 5046

Jams

Zouk Music

Flying in from Singapore, Zouk Club DJ Aldrin has a solid reputation on the International dance scene.

Where: The Club **When:** November 15, 10 pm **Tel:** 6416 1077
Master of the House

A chance to hear legendary DJ John Digweed, known as the "grand daddy of house."

Where: Club Mix, north gate of Worker's Stadium **When:** November 18 **Tel:** 6530 2889

Metal Music

DWMC-5, Painful Belief (Tongku De Xinyang), Bingyong and Twisty Machine (Niuqu De Jiqi).

Where: Wuming Gaodi Bar, building 14, Yayuncun Anhui Beili **When:** November 15, 9 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6489 1613

Big Easy Jazz

Saturday is the first annual Big Easy Jazz Festival, featuring five jazz bands, local and overseas.

Where: Big Easy **When:** November 15, 7 pm **Admission:** 300 yuan (includes dinner) **Tel:** 6508 6776

Exhibitions

Xiao Feng and Michael Danner

Chinese and German artists Xiao Feng and Michael Danner will show their oil paintings in a joint exhibition from Saturday.

Where: Creation Art Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu **When:** November 15-23, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570
Guan Yong Modern Oil Painting Exhibition

Guan Yong's oil paintings are filled with satire and humor. His works express a deep understanding of the nature of people living at all levels of modern society.

Where: Qin Gallery, Huaweili 1-1E, north of Beijing Curio City **When:** till November 27, 9:30 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0458

Beyond Materiality

An exhibition profiling the designs of world-renowned architect, Werner Sobek, organized in conjunction with the Goethe Institute.

Where: Yan Club, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu **When:** till November 23, 10 am - 8 pm **Tel:** 8457 3506
Landscape

Meng Huang was born in Beijing and graduated from the Fine Arts Department of Henan University.

Where: Xirui Culture Art Center, A58 Gaojing Chaoyang Lu **When:** till November 20 **Tel:** 8576 6680 ext. 3002

Music

Magical Love (Shenqi de Ai)

A musical comedy performed by actors from Singapore. Set in 1930s Shanghai, the story is about a famous father and daughter magician duo, played by Kuang Jianxiong and Kuang Baosi. The villainous head of their magic troupe is jealous of their skills and wants to find the secret to their magic. He schemes and plots against them but love saves the day.

Where: Tianqiao Theatre **When:** November 14-15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-500 yuan **Tel:** 8315 6300

Activities

YPHH (Young Professionals Happy Hour)

The first 100 through the door will receive a free beer! Otherwise beer is 15 yuan and gin or vodka tonics are 20 yuan. Central offers complimentary snacks and you can also order from their delicious BBQ. Lucky Draw Prizes by Evolution Fitness with three memberships and the bottle of Champagne from Links Relocations.

Where: Central, inside Worker's Stadium **When:** November 19, 6:30 pm **Tel:** 6552 4806

Tour Hutongs and Courtyards

Tour some typical old hutongs around Beijing. Zhao Tiesheng will talk about the symbols and implications of the door design, roof motifs, window patterns and threshold and gate-side sculptures. English narration provided.

Where: Meet at Lee's Carpet House **When:** November 16, 1-5 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 8462 2081

Sports

Hike to Jingling Valley

The destination is a beautiful undeveloped mountain site, located in a deep mountain area, northeast of Beijing.

Where: Meet outside Big Easy (south gate of Chaoyang Park) **When:** November 15, 9 am **Admission:** 150 yuan per adult, 100 yuan for children under 12 **Tel:** 6553 2228

Sanda Tournament 2003

An evening of high intensity martial arts.

Where: Chaoyang Stadium **When:** November 21, 8 pm **Admission:** 30-800 yuan **Tel:** 6406 9999

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By Guo Yuandan

Stage

AWARDING-WINNING ACROBATICS SHOW

Ten circus troupes from around the world, all prize winners at the recent Eighth Wuqiao International Acrobatics Festival, are appearing on stage in Beijing. Wuqiao is known as the birthplace of the Chinese Acrobatics. The festival, initiated in 1987, is one of the three most important acrobatics competitions in the world.

Where: Workers' Gymnasium
When: November 21, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-580 yuan **Tel:** 6554 6666

Movies

Wo de Xiongdi Jiemei (Roots and Branches)

Directed by Yu Zhong, starring Jiang Wu, Xia Yu and Liang Yongqi

The story begins in northwest China in the 1970's, just as the Cultural Revolution is winding down. The family of a middle school music teacher lives a relatively simple life, doing their best to ignore the poverty and troubles of the time until their fortunes

take a downward turn. Chinese with English Subtitles.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** November 14-15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 13901134745

Viola

Directed by Donatella Majorca. Marta (Stefania Rocca) lives a lonely, single life. One day she meets online lover, Mittler (Ennio Fantastichini), in a chat room. A torrid Internet affair ensues, spiraling out of control and blurring the boundary between reality and cyberspace. Italian with English subtitles.

Where: Cultural Office of Italian Embassy, 2 Sanlitun Donger Jie **When:** November 20, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl

Directed by Gore Verbinski, starring Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom, Geoffrey Rush,

Keira Knightley. Jack Sparrow (Depp) and Will Turner (Bloom) brave the Caribbean Sea to stop a ship of pirates led by Captain Barbossa (Rush), who intend to break an ancient curse... with the blood of the lovely Elizabeth Swann (Knightley). English.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Kexueyuan Nanlu, Shuangyushu, Haidian **When:** from November 21 **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 6261 2851



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By Chen Ying

Any tour of Guilin must include a visit to Elephant Trunk Hill, by the Li River. It is accessible by land or by water, in either one of the numerous, invariably crowded, tour boats that ply the river, or in a smaller hire craft. A six-seater launch can be hired for about 150 yuan.

After a sight-seeing boat trip, the river bank near Jiefang Qiao (Liberation Bridge) has many restaurants where you can sit and admire the view of the river while enjoying a meal of freshly caught fish. Locals are partial to a kind of fish caught in the Li River, called *maweigu*, either *huangmen* (stewed with soy sauce) or *qingtang* (braised in light soup).

Jiefang Bridge is not far from the downtown area. It is about a 20-minute walk to Zhengyanglu, a pedestrian street and Guilin's main commercial area. The street is near Zhongxin Guangchang (Central Square), where the Guilin Lijiang Waterfall Hotel stands at the southeast corner. The deluxe five-star hotel is a tourist attraction in itself, attracting crowds of visitors every evening at 8:30 to see the waterfall cascade 45 meters down the side of the building.

Another snack option worth considering is Wangjiao restaurant at Yirenlu. There are numerous counters offering a variety of cooking styles.

Guilin is arguably the best known tourist destination in China. While backpackers tend to give this somewhat overdeveloped beauty spot a miss, preferring to head straight for the smaller and rather more friendly Yangshuo, there is plenty to see in and around Guilin, hordes notwithstanding.

Goin' down to Guilin

Dragon terrace

Longji Titian (Dragon Backbone Terraced Fields) is another site visitors should not leave off their itinerary. The terraces, on which the local farmers have just finished harvesting their crops, are located at Longsheng County, 78 kilometers north of Guilin. They were first built almost 1,000 years ago, during the Yuan Dynasty.

There are two areas of terraced fields, known as Jia (A) and Yi (B) districts. District B, which is larger and even more spectacular than A, has only been open as a tourist site for one year.

Several minority nationalities inhabit these mountains, including the Zhuang and Dong nationalities. In some of those villages, it is possible to spend the night in one of the ancient family residences for about 15 yuan.

Getting there:

Take the bus from Guilin Changtu Qichezhan (long distance bus station) to Heping, and from there take a mini bus to the terraces. The whole trip will take about three hours.

Entry to the terrace area: 30 yuan

Another place of interest nearby is Longsheng Hot Springs, about 32 kilometers northeast of the town. The spring water gushes out of the ground from a depth of some 1,200 meters, at temperatures of 45 to 58 centigrade.



Along the Li River

There are several options for sightseeing along the Li River. Most people opt to take a river cruise downstream to Yangshuo, and then a bus back to Guilin (the return trip by boat, against the swift current, is painfully slow). Others take a bus directly to Yangshuo, and use it as a sightseeing base. A hardy few set on from Guilin on foot, hiking along the river all the way down to Yangshuo. The third option might take you the closest to the spectacular scenery along the way, but it is rather more time consuming than the first two!

If time is limited, a four-hour cruise down to Yangshuo will take you past all the best known sights and leave plenty of time for sightseeing.

Before returning from Yangshuo, it is well worth making a detour to Liugong, a remote village about 40 minutes drive from Yangshuo. Cycling there is another option (bicycles can be hired in Yangshuo), as is hitching a ride on a passing tractor. Liugong still attracts a relatively small number of tourists, but many backpackers recommend it, describing it as one of the most beautiful sections of the Li River.

Around Yangshuo

There are numerous popular sightseeing spots around Yangshuo, most of which are within easy cycling distance, such as Butterfly Spring, the Big Banyan Tree and Moon Hill.

It is also possible to spend the night in the home of local villagers while touring around the countryside.

In Yangshuo, the place most visitors stay is Xi Jie (West Street). Xi Jie is bustling night and day, bursting with small, privately run hotels, restaurants, bars and souvenir shops.

One of the most popular dishes in the local restaurants is, of course a fish dish, called *Pijiyu* (Beer Fish). Made with a variety of fish called *wucaoyu*, locals consider the large scales of the fish a particularly tasty source of nourishment. There are also many shops and stalls selling sweets. One called *Laojixiaoichi*, at the north end of West Street, is particularly popular with backpackers.



Inside the Silver Cave



Dragon Backbone Terraced Fields

Photos by Photocom

Drifting down the Yulong River

The Yulong River flows into the Li River near Yangshuo. Local farmers offer tourists river trips on the bamboo rafts used by fishermen. The best way to take such a trip is to bicycle upstream, put the bikes aboard the raft, and drift back down the river.

The river journey takes about five hours to complete from where you board the raft. The most picturesque landscape is from the middle section to the Big Banyan Tree. Renting a raft is 40 to 80 yuan, depending on the seasons.

Wangfujing Paleolithic Museum

By Guo Yuandan

The Wangfujing Paleolithic Site, dating back 24,000 to 25,000 years, was discovered in 1996 during the construction of Oriental Plaza at Wangfujing.

Wang Xin, curator of the museum, told *Beijing Today* last Friday, "It is another significant archaeological discovery made in the Beijing area, following the finding of the Zhoukoudian Cave Complex."

The museum is located at the actual site of the find, 11-12 meters below ground level. It displays many of the over 2,000 stone artifacts, bone tools and animal fossils discovered at the site, as well as charts and illustrations depicting the living conditions of the ancient inhabitants of the site.

Where: Basement level 3, Oriental Plaza **Hours:** 10:00am – 4:30pm **Admission:** 10 yuan **Tel:** 85186306



A section of the original site

Photo by Guo Yuandan

Daxu Ancient Town

Around 20 kilometers southeast of Guilin is the ancient town of Daxu, which dates back to 200 BC. To protect the ancient part of the town, many local residents have moved into newly established districts, although quite a few families still live in the old houses. Antique silver ornaments can be picked up here, but be prepared for some hard bargaining.

There is an island called Mazhou Island near Daxu Ancient Town. Largely covered with orange plantations, visitors can pick oranges, if they are in season, or enjoy a meal at the restaurant near the pier, which is famous for its chicken soup. It might be so delicious because the chickens are all free range. It can be quite entertaining watching the restaurant staff attempting to catch one of these chickens, which live among the bamboo forest along the riverbank.

Getting there:

Take a bus from Guilin long distance bus station for the half hour trip to Daxu.

Going underground

There are several stalactite caves around Guilin open to tourists. Seven Star Cave and Reed Flute Cave are probably the best known of these, however Silver Cave, which opened in early 1999, is another option.

Located at Maling, in Lipu County, Silver Cave is 85 kilometers south of Guilin, just 18 kilometers from Yangshuo. Tourists can follow a two kilometer path through the cave, which takes about one hour to walk.

Getting there:

There are regular buses to Silver Cave from Yangshuo. The fare is about three yuan.

Admission: 50 yuan